A Stop to the course of Separation:

OR THE

SEPARATION

OF THE

New Separatists

FROM THE

PARISH CHURCHES

CONDEMNED,

By a sober Answer to the chief Pleas for this disordrely practise.

Wherein is discovered how *contrary it is*,

1. To the *Holy Scriptures*.
2. To the Reason of the thing.
3. To the judgement of the *old Nonconformists*.
4. To Themselves *heretofore*.

Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and the things wherewith one may edifie another. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth, Rom. 14. v. 19, 22.

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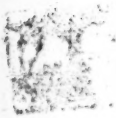

TO THE READER.

Chriſtian Reader.

IT is not a vain humor of ſcribling, nor an affectation of being an Author, which creates thee the trouble of theſe Papers, but that great ſenſe I have of the manifold evils of Separation, which are as deſtructive to the Church of Chriſt, as tearing one member from another is to the natural body. And ſince the great Apoſtle of the Gentiles commands us to have ſuch a fellow-feeling of the ſufferings of the Chriſtian

Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, whereof we are all members, as the members of the natural body have of each others sufferings, I should fear whether I were a living member of Christs body, had I not some smart resentments of these rents and divisions which are daily made in it. And since there are those who are very busie in justifying and widening these divisions, surely it can be no fault to oppose my self to that growing evil; an attempt, which if it want success, yet may merit a favourable censure. It is well known how our ancient Nonconformists, though they scrupled the use of some Ceremonies then, and still enjoyned and practised in our Church,

yet

yet did both by their writings and practiſe, condemn Separation from our Pariſh Churches: This hath been juſtly urged againſt the Separation of ſome among us, who ſtill pretend to be the Succeſſors of thoſe Peaceable *and* Conformable diſſenters, *and take it very ill to be ranked among Browniſts and Independents, becauſe forſooth they diſown their principles, though they eſpouſe their practiſes.*

And therefore to vindicate themſelves in this point, and that they might not be thought Apoſtates from thoſe principles they have ſo vehemently contended and fought for, and that they may avoid the force of thoſe killing Arguments

ments the ancient Puritans urged against the Brownists of those days, they have endeavoured to find out a vast difference between the state of the Church now, and what it was in those days.

The design therefore of these Papers is to consider all those pretended differences between the present state of our Church, and what it was in the days of the old Nonconformists; and if it appear there is no material difference (of which I leave the Reader to be judge) it must then necessarily follow by their own Concessions, that they are as down-right Schismaticks, as the ancient Brownists and our present Independents are.

This I have endeavoured to examine

miue with Christian candor and impartiality, and without any other sharpnes of stile, than what the sharpnes of an Argument gives it. I beseech thee Reader to consider it with all due candor and impartiality, and joyn thy prayers to mine, that God would at length restore peace and unity to his Church.

Farewel.

ERRATA.

PAge 34. line 24. for *Reformation*, read *Reſtauration*, p. 41. l. 10. for *that*, read *thus*, p. 57. l. 14. for *Marks*, r. *Mark*, p. 62. l. 5. for *A true Religion*, r. *The true Religion*, p. 80. l. 17. for *as*, r. *at*, p. 101. l. 23. for *by*, r. *to*, and in the next line for *to*, r. *by*, p. 127. l. 10. for *mentable*, r. *lamentable*, p. 155. l. 18. for *Art*, r. *Act*, p. 157. l. 11. for *which*, r. *when*, p. 160. l. 13. for *to* r. *with*.

A Sober Answer TO THE MAIN ARGUMENTS Of the New Separatists from the Parish Churches, to stop the Course of their destructive Separation.

Argument I.

Such Ministers as the Scriptures command us to Avoid, and have No company with, nor so much as Eat with, are not to be joyn'd with in Church Communion as our Pastors; But those that by subscription, and open declaration to the

Church in their Miniſtry, do abſolve all the perſons in the Three Kingdoms from the obligation of Reformation, in caſe of very great Church-corruptions, and juſtifie them all from the guilt of perjury, are ſuch. Ergo.

Anſ. 1. BY thoſe Scripture Precepts to Turn from, Avoid, and Not eat with the wicked; 'Tis manifeſt, ſaith *Grotius*, No act is ſignified greater than a private one; For what is the Church here bid to do, but what a Diſciple doth, when he deſerteth an Evil Doctor; or honeſt men do, when they renounce the friendſhip or ſociety of their Companions fallen into wickedneſs.

Grotius Right of higheſt power.

Doctor *Hammond* alſo interpreteth the Apoſtles prohibition of the *Corin-*

Corinthians to eat with wicked Church-Members, to be meant of intimate familiarity with them; ſo doth the Engliſh Annotators. Annot. upon 1 Cor. 5. 11.

But they will ſay, If a man may not hold Civil Communion with ſuch, much leſs may he hold Church Communion. *Object.*

This Inference the Separatiſts made in *Calvin*'s dayes. Take it in his own words, "Here (ſaith he) "they cry out, if it be not lawful "to eat common bread, how "may it be lawful to eat the "bread of the Lord. To which he "anſwereth. "Whereas they think "it Sacriledge to be partakers of "the Lords bread with them, ſpeak-"ing of wicked men, they are "therein much more rigorous than "*Paul*; for where he exhorteth us "to a holy and pure partaking, he "requireth not that one ſhould exa-"mine another, or every one the "whole Church, but each man "himſelf, *Anſw.* *Calvins Inſtit. p.* 343.

"himſelf; whereby he ſheweth "that the company of wicked men "at the Lords Table do not hurt the "godly; He that eateth unwor-"thily, eateth judgment to *himſelf*, "not to *others*.

Cal. Inſt. lib. 4. p. 343.

Then again he ſaith, "It is not "in the power of private perſons "to determine the Communicants "at the Lords Table; they have not "the judgment of office.

Again, "I do indeed, ſaith he, "not deny, That it is the doing of "a godly man, to withdraw himſelf "from all private company of evil "men, to have no willing familiari-"ty with them. But it is one thing "to flee the company of Evil men, "and another thing, for hatred of "them, to flee the communion of "the Church.

To be ſhort, ſince it is in the power of private perſons, to chooſe who they will ordinarily, and frequently converſe with at their own Table

Table and in common Converſation, but not at the Lords : and 2ly That doing their own duty, they are in no danger of being hurt by the wickedneſs of Communicants at the Lords Table : and 3ly that experience proveth familiar Converſation with wicked men to be extreme dangerous : it followeth that men may lawfully hold Church-Communion, where they may not hold Civil. Pſal. 106. 35.

2. But if the Scripture precepts, to Withdraw from, Avoid, and not Eat with the Wicked, may poſſibly be extended to Church-Communion, which I do believe ; Then *ſuo ordine*, to every one in their own order and place ; for God is the God of order, and not of confuſion. As they reſpect the Governors of the Church, they call upon them for the inflicting of Church Cenſures : As they reſpect the People, they put them upon minding their

Officers of their duty, and call for their own concurrence with them therein; but not to ſeparation, if that be neglected.

The brethren ſhould diſtinguiſh between an *Orderly Motion* of the Church Members in their ſeveral capacities to the putting bad Miniſters and People out of the Church: And a DISORDERLY COMMOTION by the irregular withdrawing and ſeparating of a Party FROM the Church. Perhaps the firſt may be inferr'd from thoſe prohibitions, to Eat with the wicked; but the laſt, which is the practical Inference of the Brethren, is abſurd, becauſe it cannot be done without culpable Schiſm, and threatning the ruin of the whole, by cutting the Church into ſhreds, and dividing the houſe of Chriſt within it ſelf, which whenſoever it falleth out, Chriſt ſaith, That houſe cannot ſtand.

Matth. 12. 25.

3. If it were no ſin to hold Communion

munion with Prieſts, ſons of *Belial*, that knew not the Lord; then ſurely it is no ſin to maintain communion with Paſtors, though guilty of as bad crimes as thoſe mentioned in the Argument of the Brethren: But it was no ſin to hold Communion with *Hophni*, and *Phineas*, the two Sons of *Eli*, being Prieſts, notwithſtanding the enormous wickedneſs of thoſe men, we find no Precept to the People to diſown Church Communion with them, ſo long as they ſtood legally poſſeſt of the Prieſts Office; but on the contrary, the People that took the ſcandal, and began to abhor the Ordinances for their ſake, are called tranſgreſſors, 1 *Sam.* 2. 24.

The wicked Scribes and Phariſees, though our Saviour told the People they were covetous Hypocrites, blind Guides, ſuperſtitious, making void the Commandments of God by their own Traditions; ſuch Matth. 23. 23, 25, 33.

as without repentance could not escape the damnation of hell: Yet for that they sat in *Moses* Chair teaching the Law, Christ not only alloweth, but commandeth the People to hear them. And Mr. *Norton* of *New-England* teacheth, That his Precept to hear them, importeth full Church Communion with them. It is therefore no sin, but a duty (as the case may be) to hold Communion with Ministers guilty of as bad crimes as the Brethren insinuate the Parish Ministers to be guilty of.

Matth. 23. 2.

Personal crimes in allowed publick Ministers will not justifie disowning them in Church Administrations; and all that is affirmed in the Brethrens Argument against the Publick Ministers, are but personal crimes: So that though all were true which is alledged against them, it would not thence follow, that it were a sin to joyn in Church communion

munion with them, as Paſtors. To this purpoſe *Calvin*.

"Nothing is added or diminiſh- Calv. In-
"ed by the worthineſs or unworthi- ſtit. lib. 4.
"neſs of him by whom the Sacra- P. 439.
"ments are delivered; and even
"as among men, if a Letter be
"ſent, ſo the hand and ſeal be
"known, it maketh no matter
"what manner of man be the Car-
"rier. Even ſo it ought to ſuffice
"us, to know the hand and ſeal of
"the Lord in his Sacraments, by
"what Carrier ſoever they be
"brought. Hereby, ſaith he, the
"Error of the Donatiſts is well
"confuted, which meaſured the
"force and value of the Sacrament,
"by the worthineſs of the Mini-
"niſters. It nothing hindered the
"Jews to be circumciſed of un-
"clean Prieſts or Apoſtates.

4. The grievous crimes charged in the Minor, upon One and All the Publick Miniſters, are onely confidently

dently asserted; not proved, nor any thing said in order thereunto; therefore may justly be neglected.

5. If we should never have communions with Pastors, that one party or other have not charged with the like crimes, we should never have held communion with any in *England* for many years. I am grieved to speak it: For as the present Conformists, for abjuring the Covenant, are now called perjured persons by the offended Brethren, because they renounced the Covenant: So were the Non-Conformists themselves called perjured persons by the Conformists heretofore, because they took the Solemn League and Covenant, being in their judgments cross to divers Oaths formerly taken by multitudes of themselves, particularly the Oaths of Allegeance, Supremacy, and Canonical Obedience.

6. Very wise and conscientious

men

men, think the Subſcriptions and open Declarations the Objection ſpeaketh of, doth not hinder the uſe of any *Moral* Endeavours of Reformation *in* the Government, but only *ſeditious* Endeavours of Extirpation *of* the Government now eſtabliſht by law. And if the Solemn League and Covenant, heretofore taken, bound men to uſe any *ſuch* Endeavours, to deſtroy the publick Eſtabliſhment then in being, or now re-eſtabliſhed, it ought to be repented of, and not ſtood to, except Sedition and Rebellion be no ſin. The Brethren ſhould diſtinguiſh upon the obligation from the Solemn League and Covenant; 1. As it contain'd a new obligation to do ſome things which we are all bound to, if we had never taken it; namely, in our places and callings, to endeavour Church-Reformation, according to the word of God. Now, in this ſenſe, no body is enjoyned

joyned to declare againſt it, which the Objectors do not conſider. But only in the ſecond place, as it containeth an obligation in our Places & Callings, and with our lives and fortunes to endeavour the extirpation of Church-government by Arch-Biſhops, and Biſhops, &c. and by this means to overthrow our fixed Eccleſiaſtical State; to root out the Government eſtabliſhed by law, which 1. The King took his Oath to maintain, at his Coronation; 2. The Government confirmed by *Magna Charta*, and by thirty Parliaments; 3. And that enjoyned and taken without the Kings conſent: for the Covenant ſaith not we ſhall endeavour to root out Prelacy [If the King will give leave]: Nay 4. Contrary to the Kings Proclamation, *October* 9. 1643. wherein he admoniſheth his Subjects to beware of it, and prohibiteth them to take it upon their Oaths of Allegeance, ſaying,

ſaying, that whatever the pretences of it were, it was in truth nothing but a traiterous ſeditious Combination againſt him, and the eſtabliſht Religion, and Laws of the Kingdom: 5. A Government which *Grotius* telleth us is repugnant to no Law Divine, but it is approved by Divine Law, That the Univerſal Church hath received it, That this Prelacy hath its pattern in the Law Natural and Moſaical, and had its beginning in the Apoſtolical times; and that the hiſtory of all times proclaimeth the many commodities that have come to the Church by it: And which wiſe *Fregivil*, a man of a deep head, as Biſhop *Hall* calleth him, ſpeaking particularly of the Engliſh Prelacy, ſaith, it is grounded on Gods word; and that in ſuch a mighty Church, as the Church of *England* is, the STATE of the Church ought to be preſerved; for Equality, he ſaith, will be hurt-

Grotius Right of higheſt power.

hurtful to the State, and in time breed confusion. A Government which *Calvin* commendeth to the King of *Poland*, that for order sake in so great a Kingdom, he adviseth the King to establish Bishops in every Province, and over them an Arch-Bishop and Primate.

Calvin's Epist. ad Reg. Pol. p. 140, 141.

Zanchy saith, "He that will receive and follow the use and the opinion of the Universal Church, in all times and places unto this age; for a certain Interpreter of Gods word will easily understand, that the several degrees of Priests and Bishops, in the Ecclesiastical Government, are, and ever were, according to Gods Word: therefore where they stand still, they must not be abolished; and where the contrariety of times hath abolished them, & not suffered them, they must be set up again. And that with *Calvin* he saith, "They are worthy of any execration

Zanch. Thes. de vera Reformandarum Ecclesiarum ratione.

"that

"that will not ſubmit themſelves to "that Hierarchy that ſubmitteth it "ſelf to the Lord Jeſus.

Again, this is his Proteſtation, "That before God, and in his con- "ſcience, he held them all for no "better than Schiſmaticks, that ſet "this down, as a part of the Refor- "mation of Churches, to have no "Biſhops, that have any Eminence "of degree and Authority, above "their true fellow Prieſts, where "they may well be had.

Du Moulin alſo telleth us: "That "the Superioriry of the Engliſh "Biſhops hath been approved by "the moſt worthy Paſtors of the "French Churches. That it was "neceſſity, not any Theological de- "ciſion, made *France* a Church "without Biſhops. Buckler of Faith upon the Article of the French Confeſſion.

Martin Bucer, for the weal of the Church of *England*, he being to aſſiſt in the work of Reformation, "We muſt endeavour, ſaith "he, *Bucer Tract. de Reformandâ Eccleſ. Tom.* 2.

" he, that all the manner and di-
" ſtribution of Eccleſiaſtical Go-
" vernment, which the Canons
" preſcribed to Biſhops and Metro-
" politanes, be reſtored and main-
" tained.

Beza's Epiſtle to the Brethren of the Engliſh Church.

Likewiſe *Beza* declared his diſlike of thoſe that reſiſted Epiſcopal power, where it was eſtabliſhed. He exhorteth ſome diſſenting Brethren in *England*, That leaving all bitterneſs they ſhould obey the Queen, and all the Prelates with a free heart; and called it ſelf-conceited pride in them that rejected their Authority.

S. *Jerome* telleth us, " That it
" was decreed all the world over,
" that One choſen from among
" the Presbyters ſhould be *ſet o-*
" *ver the Reſt*, to whom *all* the
" Care of the Church ſhould per-
" tain. Further ſaith, " The Chur-
" ches ſafety conſiſteth in the digni-
" ty of the chief Prieſt, that is, the
" Biſhop;

"Biſhop, to whom if there be not "given a SUPERIOR POVVER o- "ver all the Reſt, there will be "made ſo many Schiſms in the "Church, as there be Prieſts. It ſeemeth then in his time, that Experience had prompted all Chriſtian Nations to ſet up Prelacy in the Church: and that not only a Prelacy of Place, but *Power*, as that which was for the good of the Church. And *Grotius* telleth us, that whoſoever ſhall affirm Epiſcopal Eminence to be unlawful, charge the Church in all Ages, not onely with folly, but impiety.

Right of higheſt power.

Mr. *Baxter* telleth us alſo, 'That 'Epiſcopacy was no ſuch upſtart 'thing, nor defended by ſuch con- 'temptible reaſons, as that the Con- 'troverſie is like to die with this 'Age; undoubtedly there will be a 'learned and godly party for it 'while the world endureth. And in another place, 'That ſome of the

Baxter of Church Governm. p. 300.

'Prelates were venerable for their 'Admirable learning and piety, and 'that Prelacy had not a few mean 'persons to adorn and credit it.

What a prodigious error then, and evil was it (all these things considered,) to enter into a solemn League and Covenant, without any more ado, (not so much as consulting the Bishops) to extirpate the very Government it self, to introduce we knew not what in the room, as experience quickly proved.

Bishop *Bramhall* Schism p. 114.

Three things are necessary, saith learned Bishop *Bramhall*, to make a publick Reformation lawful, *Just Grounds*, *Due Moderation*, *Sufficient Authority*. There may be Just Grounds without Sufficient Authority, and Sufficient Authority without Just Grounds; and both Sufficient Authority, and Just Grounds, without Due Moderation. But he saith, they are all necessary to concur

cur to make a publick Reformation *lawful*: But the Reformation designed by the Scotch Covenant, to root out Prelacy, had none of all these three Ingredients of a lawful Reformation in it; neither Just Grounds, Due Moderation, nor Lawful Authority; and therefore the Covenant to effect such a Reformation must needs be unlawful.

To sum up all then, 1. Here was no *Just Grounds* to take such a Covenant, because for National Churches, where are Kings at head of them, it is not only a lawful, but the *best* Government, in the judgment of the wisest and greatest Students of Divinity in the whole world.

2. As there was no good grounds to take it, so there was no *Due Moderation* in the taking of it; for that the Bishops, whose interest both for themselves and the Church was deeply concern'd, were never

call'd to a free debate upon it; ſo that it was *unjuſt*, *uncharitable*, and *diſingenuous*.

3. There was no *Sufficient Authority* to *impoſe it*, becauſe the King, whom the Brethren by their Oath of Supremacy had acknowledged was within his Dominions ſupreme in all Eccleſiaſticall Cauſes, he did by Proclamation *declare* againſt it, and prohibit his Subjects the taking of it.

Kings Declaration *October* 9. 1643.

This being the truth of the caſe, the Solemn League and Covenant to root out Prelacy, was ſinful both for matter and form; and therefore not to be ſtood too, but repented of. And the Conformiſts by abjuring the Covenant, as it bound men to ſuch diſorderly reformations, are ſo far from abſolving the people from lawful endeavours of Church-Reformation, or juſtifying them from perjury, that they only teach them to pay a juſt debt

debt of repentance, for a notorious breach of the fifth Commandment, and unjuſt violation of former lawful Oaths, evils which they happened to fall into in a hurry of times, by the erroneous Doctrines and bad Example of their Leaders, which may teach the people for the future to ſtudy to be quiet, and do their own buſineſs, and take heed *who*, *how*, and *what* they hear.

7. And laſtly, let the excellent worth both for piety, parts, learning, and zeal for holineſs of many Conformiſts be conſidered, the dirt of this Argument cannot ſtick on them: But when perſons through miſtake or diſcontent ſeparate from a Church and Miniſtry, they muſt either make the *Church* and *Miniſtry vile*, or their ſeparation will make them *vile*. Men love not to be thought to do evil.

Argument II.

If we hold Communion with the Publick Miniſters, we ſhall hold Communion with them in their publick Miniſterial ſins: It is therefore a duty to ſeparate.

Anſw. 1. THe Brethren firſt conclude the publick Miniſters One and All guilty of horrible crimes without proof; and then that themſelves ſhall partake with them in their guilt, if they own them for Paſtors. By ſuch imaginations as theſe, the Devil for many years laſt paſt, hath cheated the poor people of *England*, and rob'd them of the chiefeſt gifts of the Church. Upon this ground *Robinſon*, *Cann*, and the reſt of the rigid *Brownists*, pluckt away

away the Children of the Church from the breasts of their own Mother, and put them to Nurse in the separate Congregations, and ruin'd them. *Read Mr.* Baxters *Epistle to the separate Congregations.*

2. The publick professed Ministerial sins of the Publick Ministry that the Objector speaketh of, if there be any, are only sins of ignorance, otherwise it is not like so many worthy men should venture on them: Or indeed were the publick professions, which the Objector calleth sins, *so* indeed, it is much that such and so many hundred profound judgments should not be convinced of their sinfulness. But

3. Let that fall out how it will, the ground of the Brethrens separation on that account is not good: for that holding communion with Ministers barely as *Ministers* of the *Gospel*, (and the Common-people can be charged with no other) will

not make people participate with them of their Miniſterial ſins. 'Tis one thing to partake of a Miniſters gifts, and Chriſts Sacraments by his hand; another thing to communicate of his ſins. Again, 'Tis one thing to participate with a Miniſter in the Miniſtry of that which is good, another thing to participate with him in the guilt of that which is evil. Now I ſay Gods people may partake of the Miniſters Gifts, and Chriſts Sacraments by his hand, without participation of the guilt of his perſonal or Miniſterial evils; Or elſe the holy Prophets and people of old would never have held Church-communion with the wicked Prieſts in their time; neither would Chriſt have commanded his Diſciples to communicate in the gifts of the Scribes and Phariſees ſitting in *Moſes* Chair, of whom he told his Diſciples at the ſame time, that they were wicked men, that ſaid, and did not. 4. If

4. If the brethren themſelves could not partake of their own Miniſters miniſterial gifts, without participating of their miniſterial ſins, they had better never communicate with them at all. Oh! how great and how many were the miniſterial ſins of the Paſtors of divided parties, in our late confuſions upon unhinging the Government; one party prayeth againſt another as Schiſmaticks; the other preacheth and prayeth againſt them as Tyrants; a third party preacheth and prayeth againſt them both, as Antichriſtian Miniſters; a fourth party preacheth, and prayeth, and writeth againſt them all, as under the fourth Beaſt, ignorant of the work of the day, railing on Superiours. Should the poor people, by joyning in Church-communion with Paſtors, become guilty of their miniſterial ſins thereby, they are ſometimes ſo great and ſo many, that it would go near to

juſtify

ſtify the neglect of all Ordinances, and all Miniſters.

5. And laſtly. The Brethren that object, for the moſt part, do not ſcruple to hold communion with publick Miniſters in prayer and preaching, which ſure they would not do, if they thought they ſhould partake with them of their miniſterial ſins thereby. And what good reaſon can be given, why Communion in the Sacraments ſhould make perſons partake of the miniſterial ſins of the Adminiſtrator, any more than communion with them in prayer and preaching?

Argument

Argument III.

If the Pariſh Churches be fill'd with Uſurpers, and the true Miniſters thruſt into Corners, then 'tis no ſin to ſeparate.

1. LEt the Brethren learn of Mr. *Baxter*. 'The Church is 'bound, ſaith he, to take many a 'man as a true Miniſter to *Them*, 'and receive the Ordinances from 'him in faith, and expectation of a 'bleſſing upon promiſe, who yet 'before God is a ſinful Invader, 'an *Uſurper* of the Miniſtry, and 'ſhall be condemned for it.

Anſw. *Baxter's* Church-Government. p. 131.

2. But the preſent Pariſh Miniſters are no *Uſurpers*.

To uſurp is to take poſſeſſion of a place, once belonging to another, *without* or *againſt* law. The Pariſh Miniſters now do not take their

their places without or againſt law; and therefore are no Uſurpers, but true and lawful poſſeſſors of their places.

3. What was that created the Brethrens right, *in their opinion*, to publick places in the Long Parliament dayes, and *outed* others, but ſubjection to the Laws (ſuch as they were) then in being for that purpoſe? Now if obedience to the queſtionable Laws then in being ſerved them *then* to diſtinguiſh them from Uſurpers, ſurely by a far higher reaſon, obedience to the undoubted Laws *now* will juſtify the right of preſent publick Miniſters, and diſtinguiſh them from Uſurpers.

4. When the Parliament put down the Epiſcopal Party, and ſet up the Presbyterian and Independant, the Brethren did not like to be called Uſurpers, but the Epiſcopal Party did alwayes reckon them

them ſo, becauſe they took them to come into other mens places not legally excluded, but meerly by the power of *force*, without the power of right.

5. When King *Solomon* thought good to put down *Abiathar*, and ſet up *Zadoc* in his room, *Zadoc* was no Uſurper.

Argument IV.

It is ſin for Chriſtians to be without Diſcipline, and a more profitable Miniſtry, when they may have it. The Pariſh Churches are without diſcipline, and have a leſs profitable Miniſtry. It is therefore no ſin to to ſeparate.

1. IT is indeed a ſin for Chriſtians to content themſelves without *Anſw.*

out Discipline, and the most profitable Ministry, when they may have it in a *lawful way*; that is, by Prayers to God, humble Addresses to Authority, faithful Performances of Duty, both to Ministers and Church-members; though it should alwayes be remembred, that the *Rod* is not of the essence of the Family: It concerneth the well-being, but not the being of it. But to separate from the Church, and gather Churches out of the Parish-Churches, and so to set up Altar against Altar to come at it, this seemeth a most unlawful course of seeking it: this is to deserve personal discipline ones self, for taking a bad course to come at Church discipline upon *others*. 1. Because 'tis to do evil that good may come thereof. 2. 'Tis a practise which no Scripture Precept or Example countenanceth. The Scripture Churches, both Old and New, were most grie-

grievouſly corrupted for want of diſcipline; but the Prophets, Chriſt, Apoſtles did all hold full communion with them notwithſtanding, and commanded others to do the like. Luk. 2. 21. Luke 17. 14. Matth. 23. 2.

3. Becauſe to ſeparate from the Church, *is in the nature* of the thing to deſtroy the Church, and that *directly*. 'Building the Church, ſaith 'Mr. *Baxter*, is but an orderly joyn- 'ing of materials, what then is *diſ- 'joyning* but pulling down? This is 'to cure the Church by cutting her 'throat, ſaith he. *Baxt.* Ep. to Saints Reſt.

4. The Judgments of the moſt learned Divines are utterly againſt ſeparation for the want of diſcipline. St. *Auſtin* inveighing againſt the Donatiſts ſeparation upon the ſame pretence, ſaith thus. 'The 'devices of ſeparation are vain and '*hurtful, and full of ſacriledge*, be- 'cauſe they are *ungodly*, and *proud*, 'and do much more trouble the 'weak good ones, than they amend *Calvin Inſtitut. p.* 413.

'the

the ſtout evil ones.

Calvin calleth the ſeparation of the Donatiſts, becauſe the Biſhops did neglect diſcipline, *An ungodly Schiſm*; And to doe like the Anabptiſts of his time. Let the Brethren conſider this. 'He is free 'and diſcharged from curſe, ſaith St. *Auſtin*; and *Calvin* from him, 'Who ever he be, that either by 'rebuking amendeth what he can; 'or what he cannot amend, exclu-'deth, *ſaving the band of peace*: 'What he cannot amend, ſaving the 'band of peace, he doth diſallow 'with equity, and bear with ſted-'faſtneſs.

Calvins Inſtit. l. 4. cap. 12. 413.

St. *Cyprian* to the ſame purpoſe. 'Let a man therefore mercifully 'correct what he can, and what he 'cannot, let him patiently ſuffer, 'and with love grieve and lament 'it.

To this purpoſe Mr. *Baxter*. 'Proud men, ſaith he, will not grow 'in

'in the ſame Field or Church where 'ſuch Tares do grow, but will 'tranſplant themſelves, and remove 'from the field, becauſe God will 'not pluck up the Tares; eſpe- 'cially if any *miniſterial neglect of 'diſcipline be conjoyned*; as too 'commonly it is; and inſtead of 'blaming their own pride, they lay 'the blame on the corruptions of the 'Church.

Baxt. Ep. to the ſeparate Congregations.

2. I prove the Pariſh Churches are not without diſcipline, whether we reſpect the *Power* or actual Exerciſe of diſcipline. That they have ſome power of diſcipline, I prove, 1. From the Title of Rector, which the Law giveth to all Parſons of Pariſhes; 2. From the Rubrick, where the Miniſter is not only authoriſed, but commanded to keep all ſcandalous perſons from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; And 3. from the Canon, where it is written, *No Miniſter ſhall*, in any wiſe,

mit to the holy Communion any of his Care or Flock, which be openly known to live in any notorious ſin, without repentance; nor any which have maliciouſly and openly contended with their Neighbour, until they ſhall be reconciled. 4. Every Pariſh Church hath Wardens under Oath, to preſent all ſcandalous ſinners, in order to puniſhment for their offences. 5. And laſtly, Divers perſons, both Miniſters and others, that have been proved ſcandalous, have ſuffered cenſure, both in and about *London*, and elſe-where. To ſay nothing of the Excommunication of Quakers, and others, whom the Brethren did alwayes judge worthy of cenſure.

Some are of opinion, that there have been more proper acts of diſcipline performed in the Pariſh Churches, upon juſt offenders, ſince the Reformation of the Biſhops, in a few years, than was in all the time of

of their abſence; though not ſo much as ſhould be and might be, if Officers and People did their duty. And the Brethren that complain ſhould conſider how far themſelves are acceſſary to the want of diſcipline, by their withdrawing their brotherly aſſiſtance; for that diſcipline muſt begin at the People, ſaid Mr. *Calamy* heretofore to the Independants that made this objection.

'Beſides, I cannot approve of the 'practiſe of thoſe, ſaith Mr. *Bax-* 'ter, that becauſe moſt of the world 'are naught, do therefore conclude 'men dogs and ſwine, before that 'ever they did faithfully and loving- 'ly admoniſh them, or perhaps be- 'fore ever they have known them, 'or ſpoken with them; and here- 'upon will not communicate with 'them in the Lords Supper, but ſe- 'parate *into diſtinct Congregations*; 'I perſwade to no ſuch *ungodly ſe-* *Baxters* Epiſt. to Saints R ſt.

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paration. The Brethren that ſeparate, neglect their duty in order to diſcipline, and then ſeparate from the Church for want of diſcipline.

3. If the want of diſcipline will juſtifie ſeparation from the Pariſh Churches now, then it would juſtifie the ſeparation of the Independants, and Browniſts in the Long Parliaments days: For Mr. *Baxter* ſaith, The Presbyterians then had ſhewn their Government in Paper, not in Actions. That they generally had ſettled in a conſtant neglect of diſcipline many years together. That their practice, to let none partake of the Sacrament that refuſed to be examined, at the ſame time leaving them ſtated Members uncenſured, was rather to *gather Churches out of Churches*, than to execute any proper act of diſcipline: or to this effect, &c, with much more to the ſame purpoſe.

Reform'd Paſtor, p. 216. Preface to Reform'd Paſtor.

Let the Brethren take notice by the

the way, what a deep ſenſe of evil Mr. *Baxter* had of gathering Churches out of the Pariſh Churches: And let not the Brethren think it a ſmall matter to juſtifie all the ſeparations from the Pariſh Churches in their days, againſt which they ſo mightily exclaimed heretofore. Is it a light matter to harden all the Sects in *England* that have ſeparated from the Church.

Again, With what ſincerity can the Brethren pretend the want of diſcipline, to juſtifie ſeparation from the Pariſh Churches, that for many years together ſettled in a conſtant neglect of it?

4. And laſtly, Whereas it is ſaid, The ſeparating Miniſters are the more profitable, and the more lively Miniſters,

I anſwer, I will not deny but that ſome, yea many of the Miniſters, that are now laid aſide, while they had their miniſterial ſtanding in the

Pariſh Churches, and Catholick Communion, were profitable; but the beſt of them not more profitable than many that now take their places in the publick Eſtabliſhment, if ſo profitable. Compariſons we ſay are odious.

But let them however be never ſo profitable, if they once become Paſtors of ſtated oppoſite Aſſemblies to the Pariſh Churches, they may continue zealous, but they ſhall ceaſe to be profitable as to the great ends of a Goſpel Miniſtry.

Epiſtle to ſeparate Congregations.

Mr. *Baxter* telleth the Separatiſts from the Pariſh Churches, That the Phariſees Liturgy is of too frequent uſe in the ſeparate Aſſemblies: *I thank thee, O God, I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.*

It cannot be denied, and can never enough be remembred and diſcourſed, for the admonition of all Miniſters and others, that the ſame perſons,

ſons, and that in great numbers, that while they kept the publick Communion, notwithſtanding all the pretended defects of the Pariſh Churches, they have been known to grow in all the fruits of the ſpirit, mentioned *Gal.* 5. *Faith, Love, Joy, Peace, Humility, Meekneſs, Obedience.* But after their departure from the Catholick Communion, that they might live in the Communion of a purer Church, they have been known to grow as faſt in the fruits of the fleſh; namely, Variance, Hatred, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies; and many have fallen to horrible uncleanneſs. The Independants heretofore tell us, they were caution'd againſt Browniſm, by the obſervation of the Rocks and Shelves they obſerved they ſplit upon. Apologetical Narration.

We have the ſame reaſon to beware of all Separations from the Pariſh Churches of *England* whatſoever.

Mr. *Baxter* having taken ſpecial notice of the ſtrange and wonderful Judgments of God that hath followed perſons that have ſeparated from the Pariſh Churches, for a purer Communion, writ an excellent Epiſtle to the ſeparate Congregations, wherein he lift up his voice like a Trumpet to awaken them, and convince them of their evil way: which let all the new Separatiſts read, and tremble.

Baxter Epiſtle to ſeparate Congregations.

'The Hand of God is apparently 'gone out againſt your wayes of 'ſeparation; you ſee you do but 'prepare perſons for a further pro-'greſs, Seekers, Ranters, Quakers; 'and too many profeſſed Infidels do 'ſpring up from amongſt you, as if 'this were your journies end, and 'the perfection of your revolt.

Again, 'By ſuch fearful deſerti-'ons did God formerly witneſs his 'deteſtation of thoſe that withdrew 'from the UNITY of the CHURCH.

Calvin

Calvin ſpeaking of men that break in ſunder the bond of Church Unity, which he reckoneth all to do that ſeparate from a *Church that hath the Word and Sacraments*; *No man*, ſaith he, *eſcapeth the due puniſhment of his divorce: He bewitcheth himſelf with moſt peſtilent errors, and wicked dotages.* *Calvins Inſtit. l. 4. p. 339.*

And that we have found it in *England*, as well as *Calvin* and others obſerved it in other Countries. So that for the beſt Miniſters and People to agree to break the Unity of the Church, for a purer and livelier Communion, is the way to become the worſt Miniſters and People; yea, No Miniſters, No Chriſtians.

'Oh! how dangerous and how 'deadly a temptation is it, ſaith *Cal-* 'vin, when it doth but enter into 'our heart to depart from that 'Congregation wherein are ſeen 'the ſignes and tokens by which the *Calvins Inſtit. lib. 4.*

Lord

' Lord thought fit to deſcribe his ' Church, *Let us beware*, ſaith he, ' *of ſo wicked a diſagreement.*

Argument V.

If there be in one City or Country ſome lawful Paſtors, that meet in Houſes with their Flocks, and ſome that meet in Temples, he is the Schiſmatick that meeteth not with the firſt in Houſes, being of his Charge; and he is the Schiſmatick that meeteth not with the other in Temples, being of his Charge; therefore to ſay, all muſt come to the Temples, or all muſt not, are both Schiſmatical Aſſertions.

1. This

1. THis Argument ſtandeth upon a ſandy rotten foundation, namely, that all Perſons, Miniſters and People, notwithſtanding the Laws to the contrary, may knot in Church-communion as they pleaſe. Whereas it dependeth upon the Nurſe-father of the Church to govern the Paſtors, to bound and fix the particular Church-communion of all Chriſtians in his Dominions, being a part of his work in the buſineſs of the Lord. A King of the true Religion, is not only a King of his Subjects as *Men*, but as Chriſtians; though *Bellarmine* ſay the contrary, to advance the Pope above Kings. That it is a part of his Truſt to do his utmoſt, that all things concerning the Worſhip of God and Religion may be decently, and orderly performed by his Chriſtian Subjects; and that the whole Affair of Religion may be managed

Anſw.

1 Tim. 2.

1 Cor. 14. 40.

managed to the higheſt advantage
Deut. 17. 19. for the glory of God, the honour
Pſa. 2. 11. of Religion, and the edification of Souls. Kings are commanded to keep all the Law of God, to ſerve God, to kiſs the Son. This being ſpoken to Kings, not as *Men*, for ſo it would concern them then no more than other men, but as Kings: It followeth ſome royal act is required of them, proper to them *as Kings*. Therein do Kings, as they are commanded by God, ſerve God, as Kings, if in their Dominions they command things good, and forbid evil; not only in reſpect of humane ſociety, but the worſhip of God alſo, ſaith St. *Auſtin*. And this is that Royal nurſing the Church, which by the Prophet God hath promiſed, ſaith *Grotius* in his Right of the Higheſt Power.

In order hereto, the King putteth the whole Nation into parts, as the General of an Army putteth his Souldiers;

Souldiers; buildeth, or cauſeth to be built publick Temples for each part to meet at for the Worſhip of God: Appointeth approved Paſtors for the performance of the Offices of Religion to each part; Encourageth the Univerſities, and all publick Schools of Learning; Fixeth maintenance for the Miniſtry, maketh Laws to bind all the Chriſtians inhabiting in each part ordinarily to tend upon the Word and Sacraments, adminiſtred by the Paſtors there fixed, to avoid confuſion, and to puniſh all ſuch, as diſturbers of the peace and common Order, that ſhall not obey.

By which means, if Paſtors, and other Church-Officers and People did their duty, not one Chriſtian in the Kingdom but would come under inſpection, except in ſuch Pariſhes which are grown too numerous, and indeed calleth for rectifying.

Whereas,

Whereas, if ſuch particular care were not taken, it cannot rationally be imagined, how one Third of the Nation ſhould come under any Church care at all, or ſo much as hear the Goſpel truly taught.

If the whole were not put into parts under particular Officers, the multitude would be in confuſion: If they had not publick Temples to meet at, the parts would be at a loſs for publick Meeting-places: If no Univerſities to breed and fit men for the Miniſtry, Popery would over-run us for want of learned men to defend the Truth; If Paſtors were not approved by men Orthodox, Hell would furniſh the Church with Hereticks and falſe Prophets, inſtead of true Paſtors; If Maintenance for Miniſters were not fixed, Miniſters would be diſcouraged; for many would rather have no Miniſters, than be at the charge of maintaining them. If no Laws to bind

bind Christians to frequent the Publick Ordinances, and keep their Stations, multitudes would indulge themselves in idleness and schism, which the Laws are a curb to.

Now where is the man living that can tell a better way to provide for the honour of Religion, and the salvation of a great Nation of Christian souls, where there are so many millions to be lookt after? Neither in all this doth the King any thing but in a just pursuit of his Regal Trust; for that he put forth no Act *in* Holy Things, but only *about* Holy Things: No inward Act purely Ecclesiastical, but outward purely Political, though about Ecclesiastical objects, such as *Asah*, *Jehoshophat*, *Hezekiah*, and others of the Kings of Israel did. Which Presbyterians do all allow to the Highest Power.

Besides all this, the Baptismal Covenant bindeth all that enter into

to

Rom. 13. 1. to it, to obey Authority, making Laws for the general good; for that it bindeth men to all Gospel duties, as Circumcision bound the Israelites to the Law of *Moses*.

How then can the Brethren imagine a relation between Pastor and People, contrary to the Law; as if particulars of a Community, mutually engaged to walk regularly, might break and transgress all publick Orders, and be blameless.

The Law appointeth such an approved Pastor to perform the Offices of Religion to such a Company of Christians, in such a Parish. The Law appointeth all those persons to own and attend such an one for their Pastor, till lawful Governors find cause to remove him. That Cohabitation hath an aptitude in it for constant and ordinary Church-communion, agreeth to common sense, and is according to Scripture example. Particular Churches took

their

their Name and Relation from Cohabitation in Scripture times: The Christians dwelling at *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, and *Colos*, take the name of the Church of *Corinth*, the Church of *Ephesus*, and the Church of *Colos*. And in great Cities of Christians, where the multitude is so great as in *London*, that there is a necessity of putting the whole into parts, 'tis highly reasonable for the common good, that the Neighbourhood of each part should concur together in Church-communion, because being near one another, they are in the better capacity to perform the duty of brethren to one another; so that the Law, Right Reason, and the Word of God, hath joyned the Parish Ministers and People together.

Whoever then shall go about to snatch away the People from the publick Minister, authorised by Law in this Nation (where we have a

fixed Eccleſiaſtical Eſtate) and gather the People to himſelf, to wait on his Miniſtry as a Paſtor, I fear he will prove the Schiſmatick, for that he breaketh the Union of the Church cauſelesly, and worketh confuſion in the Church of God.

Saints Rest. 'I ever approved a peaceable Conformiſt before a turbulent Non-conformiſt, ſaith Mr. *Baxter*.

Again, 'Above all be followers of 'peace and unity: He that is not a 'Son of peace is not a Son of God. 'I differ from my brethren in many 'things of conſiderable moment; 'yet if I ſhould zealouſly preſs my 'judgment on others, ſo as to di-'ſturb the peace of the Church, and 'ſeparate from my brethren, I 'ſhould fear I ſhould prove a fire-'brand in Hell, for being a fire-'brand in the Church. I charge you, 'if God ſhould give me up to any 'factious Church-rending courſe, 'that you forſake me, and follow 'me not a ſtep. Argu-

Argument VI.

Nature teacheth to hold Perſonal Communion with thoſe Churches which have all Gods Ordinances, and the pureſt Communion, and the moſt lively Miniſtry, not medling with other men.

1. NAture alſo teacheth not to hurt a Community for a private Convenience; to prefer a part before the whole, is not natural: Foraſmuch as the parts cannot be conſerved but in the whole, 'tis but reaſonable that *parts* quit their particular Inclinations to be ruled by the *Inclination* of the *whole*. The light of Nature teacheth, That the general good of Conſociations is to be preferr'd before the particular good *Anſw.*

of particular Perſons, or particular Conſociations.

2. Nature teacheth all loving, duriful, and grateful Children, not to forſake and leave their Mother when ſhe is ſick or poor, if they may keep with her without ſin; but on the contrary to labour to enrich and heal her. 'The way to cure the 'Churches, ſaith Mr. *Calamy*, is not 'to ſeparate from them, but to con-'tinue with them, and by living with 'them, to labour to enrich and heal 'them. 'By other ſins men pull 'down the Church conſequentially, 'but by ſeparation they do it direct-'ly, ſaith Mr. *Baxter*: And that by 'gathering Churches into diſtinct 'Bodies in *oppoſition*, they cut the 'throat of the Church; And ſurely that is againſt nature. If any one ſhould object; yes, but the new Separatiſts do not gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, in *oppoſition* to them. To this I anſwer in

Mr. *Calamy*'s Sermon at *Aldermanbury*, 1659.

Epiſt. to Saints Reſt.

in the words of Mr. *Baxter*: 'Build-
'ing is putting materials together;
'what then is disjoyning but pul-
'ling down? That practice then that
pulleth down the Pariſh Churches,
is done in oppoſition to them, what
ever the parties intend: But to ga-
ther Churches out of the Pariſh
Churches is to pull them down,
and therefore a practice in perfect
oppoſition to them.

3. Separation to the apparent
hurt of the publick ſpeaketh the ſad
loſs of Catholick Principles and Af-
fections. Firſt men loſe Catholick
Principles, then Catholick Affecti-
ons, and then fall to uncatholick Pra-
ctiſes, *ſinking into ſelf*. But 'tis be-
low the ſpirit and practiſe of a ge-
nerous Chriſtian to look at his *own* Phil. 2. 4.
things *only*. The Apoſtle ſought not
his own profit, but the profit of ma- 1 Cor. 10.
ny that they might be ſaved: He 33.
pleaſed not himſelf, but all men for
their edification: And 'tis his expreſs

precept to the whole Church; Let
1 Cor. 10. 24. no man ſeek his own things, but every man anothers weal.

Object. But the caſe of the Pariſh Churches is not all alike.

Anſw. 'Tis true, they are not all alike, in all reſpects; in ſome the Miniſterial gifts are more excellent, in others leſs; but they are all alike as to the lawfulneſs of Communionwith them, and the unlawfulneſs of ſeparation from them. For that every Pariſh Church, where an approved Miniſter is fixed, is a true viſible Church, to which Chriſt hath promiſed his preſence: There is all that is eſſential to a true viſible Church, that is plain, becauſe there is both *matter* and *form* of ſuch a Church. 1. There is the Matter: for there is a company of viſible Saints, that is, a company of Profeſſors of ſaving faith in Chriſt, by the Baptiſmal Covenant ſeparated for God, and dedicated to him;

him; and ſo take the name of Saints as the primitive Churches did. 2. There is the Form too; and that is congregating themſelves together in a ſtated courſe to worſhip God in Chriſt, To call upon his Name, To hear his Word, To partake of his Sacraments. Neither is any ſinful thing impoſed as a condition of Lay-communion, in the judgment of the Brethren themſelves. Now nothing more is required to denominate a true Church, with which communion may be held without ſin.

'Every Congregation, ſaith *Calvin*, that pretendeth the name of the 'Church muſt be thus tried as with a 'Touchſtone, if it have in it the 'Word and Sacraments, the Order 'appointed by the Lord, it will not 'deceive us; let us boldly yield it 'the honour due unto the Church. *Calv. Inſtit. lib. 4. p. 318.*

In another place, 'There is not 'a doubtful, not a deceitful face of

'a Church, where the Word and 'Sacraments go, reverently heard, 'and purely adminiſtred, Chriſt go-'eth along with them; for his pro-'miſe cannot deceive, *Matth.* 18. 20. 'And theſe can be no where in a 'fixed ſtayed ſtate, but they muſt 'bring forth fruit. Thus far He.

Calv. Inſtit. lib. 4. p. 341.

'The Pariſh Churches being one 'and all of this character, they are 'ſuch Churches from which a godly 'man may not ſeparate, where the 'Word and Sacraments are, ſaith '*Calvin*. Again, 'Such a Church is 'never to be caſt off though it ſwarm 'full of many other faults; yea 'ſome faultineſs creep into the Ad-'miniſtration of Doctrine and Sac-'raments.

It muſt needs then be a grievous ſin to ſeparate from the pooreſt Pariſh Church in *England*; nay the more grievous, and the greater is the ſin of a godly able Member to ſeparate from ſuch a Church, than from one

one more perfect, becauſe there is the moſt need of the brotherly aſſiſtance of abler brethren. If that part of the Church where the lot of more able perſons are caſt, happen to be uncomely by the weak gifts of the Miniſter, the ignorance and defects of the Members, let ſuch Brethren hearken to the Apoſtle upon the uncomely parts. We beſtow more abundant honour, alluding to the natural Body and Marks, that there may be no *Schiſm* in the Body. And here let me add, 1 Cor. 12. 23. 26.

Should an honeſt and zealous knowing Chriſtian, whoſe lot by Gods providence becometh caſt into the Communion of a poor weak Church; I ſay ſhould he in the fear of God, and love of the Church, and poor Brethren, in ſtead of ſeparating from the Church, hold the cloſer communion with the Church, and conſidering the true ſtate of the Paſtors and Brethren,

apply

apply himſelf to them for the general good, endeavouring to prefer the common intereſt, by all manner of holy prudent and fitting applications, he ſhall undoubtedly find comfort in it at death more than they that ſeparate: For they to their power have pulled down the Church for their private convenience; the other denied his own convenience to ſupport the Church.

Argu-

Argument VII.

As we condemn not all the Pariſh Churches beſide when we are but in one of them, ſo we condemn none of them abſolutely, when we are in none of them, elſe the Pariſh Churches ſinfully condemn the French and Dutch.

1. THe bare ſimple meeting of Pariſh Churches in ſeveral places, doth not amount to condemning one another, no more than ſeveral Companies of an united Army quartering in ſeveral places doth, becauſe though they meet in ſeveral places, they all meet as parts of one another in the ſame communion, parted only for the better accomodation of the whole. But Sepa- *Anſw.*

paratiſts, that gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches into diſtinct Congregations, under a *diſtinct* undiſcovered Government; ſuch meet not *as parts* in the Communion of the whole, but *as parties* cut off from the Communion of the whole, and in *oppoſition* to the whole: For which there being no ſufficient cauſe, they do moſt ſinfully condemn their Brethren, and ſtand juſt in the condition of a Troop or Company in an Army, that in diſcontent have withdrawn themſelves from the main Body, reſolving to ſtand upon their own defence, refuſing to give and take influences from the whole. Now look what the ſtate of ſuch a Troop or Company would be in the judgment of the Army, the ſame muſt ſuch Aſſemblies be in the judgment of the Church.

Argu-

Argument VIII.

The Temples and publick Maintenance are in the Magiſtrates hand, and he may give them to whom he will: And if he diſpoſſeſs the lawful Paſtors of them, they are bound to obey him: but they may not take themſelves diſcharged of their Paſtoral Office in relation to their Flocks. Magiſtrates ordain not Miniſters, nor degrade them.

Anſw. 1. THe Argument ſuppoſeth the Pariſh Paſtors & Churches to have no *Authoritative Government* over them at all, or elſe that they *ought* to have none; but that every particular Paſtor and Con-

Congregation throughout all *England* ſhould ſtand independent, both which ſuppoſitions are very falſe.

That in a Chriſtian Nation where the King is of a true Religion, and where there is near ten thouſand particular Paſtors and Congregations; to ſay that theſe by divine right ſhould *all* ſtand independent without ſome ſuperiour power to govern the whole, is againſt the light of nature, and common ſenſe; for where ever Multitude is, there is confuſion, unleſs that Multitude by virtue of *Order* be brought to an Unity. It cannot be otherwiſe, but that plurality not united together by the bond of Union, muſt come to diviſion, and from diviſion to contention, and from contention to confuſion, as we found by experience upon unhinging the Government by Biſhops, and the loſs of our fixed Eccleſiaſtical State.

2. Since the Reſtoration of the King,

King, and the Biſhops, the Pariſh Paſtors and Churches become fixed by *Law* again, and are under Government. And if the Brethren have taken the Oath of Supremacy, they have owned the King to be ſupreme Governor of all Perſons and Cauſes in his Dominions both Eccleſiaſtical and Civil. Now except the Brethren think the bounding particular Congregations, and ordering the Paſtors, to be no Eccleſiaſtical Cauſes: They are both under the government and ordering of the King, and determined by the Laws; and particular Paſtors and Congregations cannot claim Independency without ſin.

The King hath made the Biſhops Governors under himſelf of all the particular Paſtors and Pariſh Churches in *England*, as any one may ſee that readeth the Book of Canons, wherein the King ratifieth and enjoyneth this Canon with the reſt; That

Book of Canons. Seventh Canon.

That Excommunication *ipſo facto* pronounced againſt the man that depraveth the Government by Archbiſhops and Biſhops, &c.

Now how ſhould the Brethren continue lawful Paſtors to particular Flocks in the Church of *England*, contrary to the publick Laws of Superiours? The Law ſaith all Incumbents that perform not ſuch conditions ſhall ceaſe to be Pariſh Paſtors: Thereupon others become placed in their room. The Brethren ſay, though they do not perform thoſe conditions, and others be put in their places, yet their Paſtoral relation to their Flocks ſtandeth ſtill. Now I ask how this can be, except the Brethren reckon themſelves lawleſs perſons.

Object. Why but though they are no lawful Paſtors before the Church of *England*, and in the eye of the Law, yet they are before God.

Anſw. 1. If they are no lawful Paſtors

Paſtors before the Church, and in the eye of the Law, they cannot be lawful Paſtors of their particular Flocks before God, becauſe for the ſafety and commonweal of the Church, God hath committed the power of governing both Paſtors and Flocks to the Nurſe-father of the Church (whom the Brethren uſe to ſtile a Biſhop of things *WITHOUT*:) To that purpoſe the power of placing, diſplacing, depoſing ſuſpending, and removing Paſtors, as he ſhall find cauſe, *without* or *Againſt* the Peoples or Paſtors minds: Otherwiſe, an end ſhall be propounded him; that is, to preſerve the Churches Purity, Peace, and Unity, but the neceſſary means ſhall be denied him: One whereof, is to have the power of placing, diſplacing, tranſplanting, or temporary ſuſpending Miniſters; for that *Jus divi. Preſb.*

ſometimes they prove ſcandalous, ſometimes heretical, ſometimes ſeditious, ſometimes improved for publick uſe.

In all which caſes, it is plainly neceſſary for the common good, that Paſtors be removed, but 'tis not always found that Paſtors and People are willing to it, but the contrary. That popular election is not abſolutely neceſſary to the relation of Paſtor and and Flock (though in ſome caſes convenient) is the declared judgments of the *London* Miniſters, as well as others; for which they give ſtrong Reaſons. *Jus Divin. Miniſterii, Anglic.* p. 132.

Jus divin. Miniſt. p. 132.

Object. But if it be ſaid *further*, Magiſtrates do not Ordain Miniſters, nor degrade them.

Anſw. 1. 'Tis one thing for a Magiſtrate to degrade a Miniſter, another thing to prohibit him the exerciſe of his *Miniſtry in his*

his Dominions. This ſaith Mr. *Baxter* unqueſtionably he may do.

2. *Solomon* did not ordain *Abiathar*, but he depoſed him and ſet up *Zadoc* in his room. And Mr. *Baxter* ſaith, 'It was juſt *Solomon*, '*David*, and other Kings of *Iſrael* 'and *Judah* did take down and 'ſet up Prieſts, and order the Of-'ficers of the houſe of God. The care of the Church is ſo committed to Kings, in the Scripture, that they are commended, when the Church goeth the right way; and taxed, when it runneth amiſs: And therefore her Government belongeth in chief unto Kings; for otherwiſe, one man would be commended for anothers care, and taxed for anothers negligence. The old Nonconformiſts therefore being ſilenced, did acquieſce therein, and being objected againſt by the Browniſts for ſo doing, they

Baxter, Holy Commonwealth, p. 302.

Book of Canons, 1640.

juſtifie themſelves by this Argument, 'If a guiltleſs perſon put 'out of his charg by the Churches 'Authority, may yet continue in 'it, what proceedings can there 'be againſt guilty perſons, who 'in their own conceit are always 'guiltleſs, or will at leaſt pretend 'ſo to be, ſeeing they alſo will 'be always ready to object againſt 'the Churches judgement, that 'they are called of God, and 'therefore will not give over 'their Miniſtry at the will of 'man, Mr. *Rathband*, page 41.

Upon the whole then, it appeareth a vain Plea of the Brethren, that after their particular Flocks are by publick Governors and the Laws diſpoſed to other Shepherds legally qualified, they ſhould yet ſtile themſelves, The Legal Paſtors, and call the preſent Incumbents Uſurpers. As if a Captain when his Commiſſion

is

is taken from him, by the General, and his Company transfered to the Conduct of another, ſhould yet affirm he was Captain, and the Company his Company: Should any diſcontented Officer in an Army plead thus, and make a party upon it, and diſturb the peace of the Army, it would be very ſcandalous. There is the ſame reaſon it ſhould be ſo in the Church.

Object. But what, are Magiſtrates to be obeyed abſolutely, in point of *Paſtors*, *Church* and *Worſhip*? If ſo, then in *Spain*, *France*, *Italy*, and all over the world.

Anſw. No doubt the power of the Magiſtrate in point of Paſtors, Church and Worſhip, is limited by God: And therefore if King *Solomon* when he put down *Abiathar*, had ſet up a Prieſt of *Baal* in his room, and com-

manded the people to own him for the Prieſt of the true God, he ought not to have been obeyed: But ſince he ſet up *Zadoc* in his room, a true Prieſt of the ſame Religion, he ought to be obeyed, becauſe he did but change the *Officer*, not the *Religion*.

Object. Magiſtrates may drive us on to our duties in Religion, but not from our duties: Therefore if he command true ordained Miniſters not to preach, or people not to hear them, or not to perform their duty to them; *whether it be better to obey God or men, judge ye.*

Anſw. 1. Truth of Ordination *Alone*, will not continue a title to a publick ſtrtion in the Miniſtry *in all caſes*. *Abiathar* was truly ordained a Prieſt, but yet the Brethren grant it was lawful for *Solomon* to depoſe him. If true ordained Miniſters ſhall

after

after their Ordination, by Scandal, Hereſie or Schiſm, threaten the Church, they are to be avoided by Divine Law: As by private perſons, in a private capacity, ſo by publick perſons, in a publick capacity, for the common ſafety of the Church. *Grotius* telleth us, 'The right of removing a certain 'perſon or perſons from the Mi- 'niſtry of a certain place, ought 'always to remain in the higheſt 'power: Nor only may he do 'this by way of puniſhment, but 'by way of caution too; and un- 'leſs the higheſt power could do 'this, the Commonwealth were 'not ſufficient to ſecure it ſelf.

Rom. 16. 17.

Grotius right of the higheſt pow. *p.* 133.

p. 240.

For a Non-conforming Miniſter then, though truly ordained, to undertake to preach in this Nation contrary to Law, and draw people to hear him contrary to Law, ſome think ſo far from being any point of obedience to

God, that it maketh both Minister and people guilty of greater evils than I am willing to mention.

'Tis true, if a Jewish or Heathen Magistrate, being of a false Religion, command an Apostle of the true Religion, not to preach any more in Christs name: then to disobey man would be to obey God; which was the case of the Apostle *Peter*, who though he could work miracles to justifie his divine Commission, yet the Council of the Jews forbad him to speak any more in Christs name: Act. 4.19. To whom he saith, *Whether it be better to obey God or men judge ye.*

But this is far from our Brethrens case; and therefore this Text is impertinently urged.

Because our Non-conformists can plead no extraordinary Call to the Ministry, as *Peter* could: They can work no Miracles to justifie their Commission as *Peter* could

could. On the other hand, our Law-makers, the King and Parliament, are no Jews, as that Council was to whom the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpake thoſe words. But on the contrary,

With us the Supreme Magiſtrate is a *Chriſtian*: And inſtead of *forbidding* perſons to preach in *Chriſts name*, as the Jewiſh Magiſtrates did, he filleth the publick Temples with Paſtors or Preachers in Chriſts name: And quite contrary to the Jews, *commandeth* them to preach in his name, and the people to hear them upon certain penalties if they neglect; and for reaſons of Church and State, forbiddeth private Conventions for worſhip: As the Church of *Scotland* was ever wont to do. This is our caſe. Now for Miniſters and people, as this caſe is, to walk croſs to publick Authority, and diſobey man, I fear

is

is to disobey God, who hath said,
Rom. 13. 1 *Let every soul be subject to the higher power.*

Argument IX.

If Magistrates would appoint us unskilful Physicians for our bodies, when we can chuse better for our selves, we love our lives too well, to think we should obey them: But the Magistrate hath less power to deprive us of the choice of our own best Soul Physicians, than of our Body Physicians; for that the danger of death is less terrible, than the danger of damnation.

1. The

1. THe *London* Miniſters, as well as others, have given divers good Reaſons, why in ſome caſes, people are not to be truſted with the choice of their Miniſters. *Anſw. Jus divi. Miniſt. p.* 132.

2. Some think, by reflecting upon the furious proceedings of unpeaceable ſpirited men this laſt thirty years, that it is far better for Religion, and the ſafety of the people, to enjoy a peaceable ſpirited Miniſter, though of weaker gifts; than a turbulent, though of never ſo excellent gifts, for that peace to the Church is as life to the man.

The moſt Learned Lord *Bacon*, ſpeaking of peace in the Church, and the benefits of it to thoſe within the Church, ſaith, 'It 'containeth infinite bleſſings, it 'eſtabliſheth faith, it kindleth 'charity. Lord *Bacon*, Eſſays, *p.* 13.

'charity. The outward peace 'of the Church, distilleth into 'peace of conscience, and it turn-'eth the labours of writing and 'reading of Controversies, into 'Treatises of Mortification and 'Devotion. But speaking of dis-union, he saith, ''Tis worse for 'the Church, than corruption of 'Manners.

3. If the highest power for reasons of state, should appoint chosen and Approved Physicians to any place, who can refuse them? *Grotius* telleth us, 'Though na-'turally men chuse Teachers for 'their children, and give them 'Guardians, sick persons make 'use of what Physician they 'please; yet in many places, 'Guardianship is appointed by 'Law, or the will of the Magi-'strate; Physicians and School-'Masters are constituted by pub-'lick Order, with Interdiction of others

'others from the practice of thoſe 'faculties. And he ſaith, 'this 'right is competent to the high- 'eſt power. And as for the ap- pointing of Paſtors, he ſaith thus, 'That ſometimes there 'may be juſt cauſes why the 'higheſt Power ſhould challenge 'to its ſelf the election of Pa- 'ſtors. *No wiſe man will deny.* Many 'Reaſons he urgeth, *p.* 215. For 'often errours introduced into 'the Church of God, againſt the 'Word of God, cannot be rooted 'out by other means. Often there 'is no other way to avoid Schiſm: with more to ſame purpoſe, and concludeth, 'The manner of 'election of Paſtors to be of the 'number of thoſe things that are 'not ſpecially determined by 'Law Divine: And that accord- 'ingly in ancient time, the 'Church ſomtime proceeded one 'way, and ſometime another way,

Right of higheſt power.

'way, according to the different
Right, 'ſtate and condition of the
p. 195. 'Church. This he ſheweth at
'large; and that this alſo was
'the judgement of *Beza*, p. 195.

4. If the Doctrine preached in the pooreſt Pariſh Church in *England*, be humbly heard and embraced, though preached by a weak Miniſter, there can be no danger of damnation, becauſe 'tis the doctrine of the Goſpel of Chriſt, which is the power of God to Salvation. And the very ſame for ſubſtance which the Brethren preach in private (if they preach truth:) And if any preach contrary thereto, ſuch are no Miniſters allowed by Authority.

5. The few godly names in the Church of *Sardis*, did not only keep themſelves in the love of God, but in a ſtate of much pu-
Rev 3.1. rity, Even under a *dead* Miniſtry.

For

For that *Angel*, though he had a name to live, was dead. Salvation then is not in danger under a weak, ſo it be a true Miniſtry, unleſs it be the peoples own fault: And ſo it will be under the moſt lively Miniſtry in the world, but higher edification only; which inconvenience by diligent prayer, reading the holy Scriptures, eſpecially Chriſts Sermon on the Mount, with other good Books, godly Conference and good works, may be redeemed.

6. The natural Itch in common people to quarrel with Superiors, Paſtors and others, and withdrawing their due obedience, hath been of very ſad conſequence in *England*. 'I think, 'ſaith Mr. *Baxter*, till we have 'better taught even our godly 'people, what credit and obedi- 'ence is due to their Teachers and Mr. *Baxt.* againſt *Crandon*, p. 83.

'and Spiritual Guides, the 'Churches of *England* ſhall ne-'ver have peace, or any good or 'eſtabliſh'd order: We are bro-'ken for want of the knowledge 'of this truth, till this be known, 'we ſhall never be well bound up 'and healed.

In another place, 'Art thou ready to cenſure the Doctrine of thy Teachers, the actions of thy Rulers, and the perſons of thy Brethren, beyond doubt thou art a proud perſon, pride hath ſeized on thy heart, there is too much Hell in thee to have any acquaintance as Heaven. It is poſſible his invention and memory, may furniſh his tongue with humble and heavenly expreſſions, but in his ſpirit, there is no more Heaven than there is Humility.

S. Reſt, p. 70.

Argu-

Agument X.

The new Separatiſts do not ſeparate from the Pariſh Churches upon the ſame terms that ſome others do; viz. *as being no true Churches of Chriſt, having no true Miniſtry, nor true Worſhip, with which communion may lawfully be held: But the Presbyterians ſeparate to enjoy a better Miniſtry, Diſcipline, and a purer Communion, and will ſometimes hold Communion with the Pariſh Churches, where they can' have no better; ſo that their Separation is but like removing from one Pa-*

riſh Church to another: *'Tis not ſetting up* Altar againſt Altar.

Anſw. 1. *THe culpable Schiſm of the Brethren* lieth in matter of fact, That they cauſleſly and cruelly divide the Church, let the terms upon which they do it be what they will.

2. To remove from one Pariſh Church to another Pariſh Church, was never called Separation, nor ever counted blameworthy, becauſe all the Pariſh Churches in *England* are in one and the ſame common Communion, under one and the ſame Government and Diſcipline, meeting in parts for neceſſity ſake, and by publick order: So that by ſuch removing from one Pariſh Church to another, there is no publick Order broke, there is

is no affront offered to Authority: But to gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches eſtabliſh'd by Law, into diſtinct Congregations, under a diſtinct Government, contrary to the publick Laws, this is downright Separation: This is plainly to ſet up Altar againſt Altar, in the Language of Mr. *Baxter* in his Book of Reſt: *Such Diſunion and Separation as this*, he ſaith, *is utterly intolerable, becauſe it cutteth the Church into ſhreds: It directly demoliſheth and pulleth down the Church. Building*, ſaith he, *is but an orderly joyning the materials. What then is disjoyning, but pulling down?* and to do thus, *is to cure the Church by cutting her throat*, as hath been noted before. *Baxters* Ep. to the Reſt.

2. Theſe new Separatiſts, by their ſeparation upon theſe terms, make their Schiſm (in ſome reſpects) more criminal, and leſs

excuſable, both before God and man, than the worſt Sect that ever ſeparated from the Pariſh Churches: Becauſe the Brownists and Anabaptiſts have always pleaded for the juſtification of their Separation from the Pariſh Churches, that our Churches, Miniſtry and Worſhip were falſe, yea Antichriſtian; and therefore they could not hold Communion with the Pariſh Churches without ſin. Now though they are abuſed by their wild and mad conceits, yet their erronious conſciences makes their Schiſm leſs criminal before God, than the new Presbyterian Schiſm; becauſe though they believe the Pariſh Churches true Churches, the Miniſtry a true Miniſtry, the Worſhip true Worſhip, and therefore ſuch as they may not only lawfully hold Communion with, but that ſometimes they ought

do it: Yet presume to gather Churches out of them into distinct Congregations; and that after themselves have told us in their Divine Right of Presbytery (with truth enough) That *to gather Churches out of Churches*, meaning the Parish Churches of *England*, *is a practise without all Scripture president, contrary to Apostolical Precept*: *The scattering of the Churches, the Mother of Confusion, The Daughter of Schism, and the Stepmother of Edification.*

Preface to the Divine Right of Church-Government.

We believe the truth of this Proposition now, and that it shineth with its own light, and that it is utterly impossible ever to shew one Scripture Precept or President, where the best members have separated from a true Church (though corrupt in many things) into a *distinct* Congregation, to become a new Church of themselves, *merely* for a more *live-*

ly Miniſtry, Diſcipline, and *purer Communion*. Sure I am, the pious and zealous people of the corrupt Churches of the New Teſtament did not do thus. In the Church of *Sardis* there was but a few living names; the Miniſter and the generality of the people was dead. But what, do we find theſe few living names ſeparating from the dead Angel, and dead part of the Church, for a more pure and lively communion? No ſuch matter: Neither did the Lord Jeſus in his Letter from Heaven to theſe few living names, give them any ſuch Precept: He praiſes the few living names, that they kept themſelves pure in the communion of a bad, undiſciplin'd Church; but did not command them to ſeparate from the reſt, into a diſtinct body, for a purer communion amongſt themſelves: Yet he neither

ther wanted love to them, nor wiſdom to direct them.

3. Conſider that the moſt rigid Browniſts and Separatiſts themſelves, have declaimed againſt Separation from ſuch a Church, upon ſuch grounds as you inſiſt on. *Robinſon* ſaith thus, 'That from a true Church, ſo 'remaining, ſeparation from ſuch 'a Church is intolerable for any 'corruptions whatſoever: A 'wicked Schiſm it is, ſaith he. *Robinſ.* Reaſons diſcuſſed, p. 222.

4. Whereas you gather the beſt people out of the Pariſh Churches, into diſtinct Congregations, for a better, and purer communion ſake; conſider, this practiſe is the effect of ſinful ſelf-love, that would provide well for it ſelf, though never ſo much to the detriment of of the publick. Mr. *Edwards* ſaid from Mr. *Cartwright*, the white Devil was in this pretence. 'Tis

true, that where there is in any Nation an Army of a hundred thousand men; for *ten* or *twenty* Captains to gather all the *valiant*, *faithful*, *diligent*, *skilful* Souldiers of the Army into *ten* or *twenty* Troops or Companies: This would make ten or twenty excellent Troops or Companies, and no doubt would be very pleasant to the Captains and Souldiers so related. But what mischief, by this means, would be done to the whole Army? Were it not every way better for the whole Army, that the best Souldiers should be scattered throughout the Army, some in every Troop and Company, for the giving good example, and spiriting and provoking the rest to their duty. Consider this well, and apply this similitude to your Separation from the Parish Churches, the reason being evi-

dently

dently the ſame, and you cannot but accept conviction', that your Separation, if you ſhould perſiſt in it, would endanger the loſs of many thouſand ſouls, wrong the great intereſt of Chriſtian Religion in the Nation, and extremely hazard the Proteſtant cauſe. Remember the Church is compared to an Army with Banners.

4. Conſider how unlike this ſelfiſh practiſe is, to the *Noble, Generous*, Catholick ſpirit of Chriſt and his Apoſtles: Scripture telleth us, that Chriſt, though he was rich, he made himſelf poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. You on the contrary, to accommodate your ſelves, care not *who* nor *how many* you make poor, I mean in ſpiritual comfort.

Again, compare your practiſe with theſe Scriptures of the Apoſtle

Apoſtle *Paul*, and you will be aſhamed of it: *Look not every man on his own things, but every man on anothers alſo. Let no man ſeek his own things, but every man anothers weal. I ſeek not my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be ſaved: Upon the uncomely parts we beſtow the more abundant honour, that there may be no ſchiſm in the body, but that the whole body may have the ſame care one for another.* Brethren, to reconcile your practiſe with theſe Scriptures, you will find a hard task, except you were miſtaken when you ſaid, To gather Churches out of our Pariſh Churches, was the Mother of confuſion: If Separation be the Mother of confuſion, God is not the Author of it: For God is the God of order, not of confuſion. And if it be the Mother of confuſion, how can you proceed in ſuch a path?

Object.

Object. If you ſhall ſay, as ſome do, We hold with the ſeparate people of the Presbyterian perſwaſion, to prevent their running into other Sects, at laſt to Quakeriſm.

Anſw. 1. In the mean time you commit a groſs ſin, the ſin of Schiſm, by breaking the union of the Church without ſufficient cauſe; and that to come at an uncertain good, contrary to the rule, *Rom.* 3. 8.

2. Separation is the way to make Quakers, as our experience hath proved, rather than to pevent Quakeriſm.

3. You grieve and wrong the legal Miniſter, by ſcattering his flock, undermining his reputation with the people, weakning his maintenance, as well as the maintenance of all Pariſh officers: This was your complaint heretofore againſt the Independents.

4. You

4. You wrong the people you comply with more, by joyning with them in their ſin of Separation, than you can do them good. 1. By tacitly conſenting to their needleſs ſcruples, which you know to be ſo, and thereby become acceſſary to the weakneſs of their conſciences, and ſuperſtition that followeth upon it. 2. You train up the people to a diſlike of publick Authority by your example, and ſo feed the humour of breaking the Fifth Commandment, and teach the young man to lift up himſelf above the Ancient, and the vile above the Honorable; as they have moſt ſhamefully done for thirty years laſt paſt. 3. You train them up in ſpiritual pride, juſtifying themſelves that they are righteous, and condemning others.

5. By

5. By this practiſe you harden all the Sects in their way, and make all hopes of any ſettled Government, even in your own way, deſperate.

6. This ſeparation tendeth to Atheiſm, inſtead of Reformation: people ſeeing ſo many new unheard of ways in Religion, and all the ſeveral parties crying out to the people, Lo here is Chriſt; Thouſands of the people conclude, there is nothing certain in Religion, and neglect all.

7. To deter you from ſeparating from the Pariſh Churches, to come at a purer communion, let me put you in mind of a conſiderable ſaying of Mr. *Baxters* to the old Separatiſts, 'It is very 'remarkable, ſaith he, that it is 'a pretence of our impurity, and 'a greater purity with you, that 'is pleaded by thoſe that firſt 'turn over to you. And that this height

Baxter, Ep to Separat. Congr.

'height of all Impieties, ſaith 'he, ſhould be the uſual iſſue 'of a way pretended ſo exact 'and clean; doubtleſs it is none 'of Gods mind by this to diſcou- 'rage any from purity and true 'Reformation, but to ſhew his 'deteſtation of that ſpiritual 'pride, which maketh men have 'too high thoughts of them- 'ſelves, and too much to con- 'temn others, and to deſire to be 'further ſeparated from them, 'than God in the day of grace 'doth allow of. Conſider this, 'tis the judgement of ſome, that 'thouſands are gone to Hell, and 'ten thouſands upon their march 'thither, that in all probability 'had never come there, if they 'had not been tempted from the 'Pariſh Churches, for the enjoy- 'ment of communion in a purer 'Church.

Argu-

Argument XI.

The Pariſh Churches now, *are not as they were in the times when Presbyterians cryed out of gathering Churches out of them: Therefore their ſayings to the Separatiſts* then, *ought not to be reflected on, and urged againſt their practiſe* now; *for theſe reaſons,* 1. *Becauſe the Pariſh Churches* then, *impoſed nothing upon the Miniſter or people contrary to the word of God,* now they do. 2. *Becauſe the Pariſh Churches then were reformable, now they have covenanted againſt Reformation.*

on. 3. The Parish Churches then had proper Pastors, that had the power of the keys of Government, not so now. 4. Because in the Parish Churches now, the Presbyterian Ministers are forbidden to preach, and the people to have the Sacrament, or their children to be baptized, unless they will say and do such things as they dare not do, for fear of Gods displeasure. The Parish Churches then drove none such away from Ministry and Communion.

Insinuation

Insinuation I.

'Tis insinuated, the Parish Churches in Presbyterian days, imposed nothing contrary to the Word of God, either upon Minister or people, but now they do.

Answ. 1. THE Parish Churches cannot justly be charged with imposing any thing at all, either upon Minister or people, much less imposing any thing contrary to the Word of God; because they stand in the capacity of Subjects, not Legislators.

2. *WHAT* is it that is imposed? *First*, upon the *Parish CHURCH MEMBERS*, contrary to the Word of God, there is not any one thing instanced in, and it is judged impossible for any one to prove *one such* thing. Mr. *Baxter* communicateth with some of the Parish

Baxters Defence of the principles of love, *p.* 38.

riſh Churches, both in the Word, Prayer and Sacrament of the Lords Supper; and telleth us, that divers Learned Nonconformiſt Miniſters in 1663. at a Conference concluded it lawful ſo to do: Which they would never have done, if they had thought any thing impoſed on private perſons contrary to the Word of God.

3. Now concerning the *PARISH MINISTERS*, what is impoſed on them contrary to the Word of God, the Objector doth not inſtance in any one thing. The Conforming Miniſters themſelves think no ſuch thing of the Impoſitions upon them; if they did, in charity we are bound to believe they would never conform to them, knowing multitudes of them as tender conſcienced as any, by their general courſe of life.

4. Let it be ſeriouſly conſidered, in the fear of God, whether the Pariſh Miniſters and Churches in

1643.

1643 taking the Scotch Covenant to root out the Government eſtabliſhed by Law, confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, and contrary to the Kings publick Declaration of his diſlike of it, and prohibition of his Subjects to take it: Whether did not this act, render the ſtate of the Pariſh Miniſters and Churches, more obnoxious to exception, as to the point of communion with them, than any thing can be urged againſt the Pariſh Churches and Miniſters *now*, that live in charity among themſelves, and in obedience to their Governors and Laws, eſpecially conſidering multitudes of the Pariſh Miniſters themſelves, that ventured upon this dangerous Oath, were firſt under the Oath of Allegiance to the King, the Oath of Supremacy, and the Oath of Canonical obedience to the Biſhops.

Insinuation II.

The Parish Churches in Presbyterian dayes were reformable in that wherin they needed Reformation; But now they have covenanted against Reformation.

Answ. 1. TRue, the Parish Churches *then* wanted Reformation, but never like to be reformed in the Presbyterian way to the end of the world. 1. Because the Independents, men of great fame and interest, all manner of wayes obstructed it. 2. Because Presbyterian Examination by a new sort of Church-Officers, called Lay Elders, before receiving the Lords Supper, was *intolerable* to the people. 3. Because the Parliament would never be brought to grant the Presbyteries that power which they thought necessary to go through with the work: For which reasons the work never

Parliam. Declar. *April* 17. 1646.

never proceeded to any purpoſe, nor never like to proceed to the end of the world. So that in a hurry the old Government was pulled down, and none ever after like to be ſet up in the room of it, but every man left to do what is right in his own eyes. So that as King *James* his Aphoriſm proved true, *No Biſhop no King*; ſo this alſo, *No Biſhop in* England, *no national Church Government in* England.

2. Whereas it is inſinuated that the Pariſh Churches have covenanted againſt Reformation, and not to ſay when and wherein, is undoubtedly to inſinuate hard things againſt the Pariſh Churches, and upon very hard terms. They know no ſuch thing.

3, We know no Covenant againſt Reformation that ever was propounded by the Churches, much leſs taken to them. The people of the Pariſh Churches are under no

other Covenant now than they were in Presbyterian dayes, that any body knoweth of.

4. 'Tis true, the *Miniſters* in the Long Parliament dayes, having been ſo unhappy, as by Sermons in the the Pulpits, and Speeches at *Guild-hall*, to have too great a hand in the wars; and having bound themſelves by an oath to perſevere in their endeavours to root out Prelacy, which the preſent Parliament hath thought fit to reſtore; and the King alſo to take an Oath at his Coronation to maintain, as his Anceſtors had done before him: The King and Parliament ſince their Reſtoration, have not thought fit to admit any man into the Publick Miniſtry, without firſt giving ſecurity for his keeping the peace both in the Church and State for the future, that we may have no more ſuch bloody wars, neither Eccleſiaſtical nor Civil. This is the true

meaning

meaning of all the Miniſters covenanting that now enter into the Miniſtry, and the only occaſion of all the extraordinary Impoſitions upon them.

Now in my humble opinion, the late Publick Miniſters inſtead of quarrelling with Superiors for theſe new Impoſitions, ſhould rather quarrel with themſelves, for giving ſo great and ſo juſt an occaſion for them: And if they would agree to publiſh their Retractations and Repentances, as Mr. *Baxter* hath given them an Example, there would be little need of continuing theſe fetters any longer.

Baxters ſecond admonition to *Bagſhaw*. p. 51, 52.

Now as for the preſent Pariſh Miniſters, in what they do when they enter the Miniſtry; they are ſo far from thinking they covenant againſt Reformation, that they think they covenant only againſt Schiſm, Sedition, & Rebellion. But whether they think right, or whether they think wrong,

what is this to the poor Pariſh Churches? do the Pariſh Curches deſerve to be demoliſht, and cut into ſhreds for this, which bad ſervice ſeparation doth them; as Mr. *Baxter* and the *London* Miniſters, and the reaſon of the thing telleth us.

Inſinuation III.

The Paſtors of the Pariſh Churches in the Presbyterian dayes had the Power of the Keys of Government: 'Tis not ſo now: They were true Churches, and did own themſelves for ſuch.

Anſw.

1. THe Pariſh Churches were then, no doubt, true Churches; and ſo they are now as well as then. They did own themſelves for ſuch *then*, and ſo they do *now*; and will be owned by all Proteſtants for ſuch, except Browniſts and Anabaptiſts. Herein there is no difference

rence at all between the Pariſh Churches *then* and *now*. Mr. *Baxter* himſelf owneth the Pariſh Churches *now* for true Churches, by holding full Communion with them, and exhorting others to do ſo too; and for their encouragement inſinuateth the terms of Communion to Lay perſons to be more acceptable *now* than in the dayes of former Biſhops; and therefore in his judgment there can be no ſuch difference in the ſtate of the Pariſh Churches *then* and *now*, as to juſtify ſeparation from them.

Object. But the Paſtors in the Presbyterian dayes had the power of the *Keys* of *Government*: not ſo *now*.

Anſw 1. This cannot be truly ſaid of the Paſtors of the Pariſh Churches, That they have no power of the Keys. The Law calleth them Rectors; and in Ordination the Keys are committed to them. And by the

the Rubrick and Canons every Pariſh Paſtor is commanded to uſe the Keys of Government, by ſuſpending ſcandalous perſons from the Lords Supper; ſo that they ſin if they do not govern: Yea 'tis plain, the Pariſh Paſtor doth exerciſe a true ſpiritual Government over the Flock, as the Captain doth in fight when he goeth before his Soulders and leadeth them on and off. He governeth them by a Paſtoral Government while he guideth them in Doctrine, Prayer, and Sacraments. Every Pariſh Miniſter participateth of the three Offices of Chriſt, *Kingly*, *Prieſtly*, and *Prophetical*; and every Pariſh Church is a true Political Society: That which cannot be ſaid of any Independent Church in the world. The Pariſh Churches have *pars regens*, and *pars ſubdita*, ſo can no Independent Church ſay, becauſe of their popular Government, which maketh

keth them rather take the name of *Lamps* than *Bodies*.

And though every Miniſter participate of the three Offices of Chriſt, the exerciſe may be ſo diſtributed among the Paſtors in a fixed Eccleſiaſtical ſtate, that one ſhall do more of the Teaching part, another more of the Ruling part, upon grounds of prudence, yet the ruling part is not wholly taken out of their hands. This is the caſe of our Pariſh Paſtors; and the truth is, the Law for carrying the rugged part of diſcipline out of the hands of the particular Paſtor, into a Court eſtabliſhed by Law for that purpoſe, ought not to be reckoned a degrading of the Paſtor of one part of his Office, but a regulating them rather for the general good in the execution of their Office: it taketh off a load of envy from the particular Paſtor, which otherwiſe would lye upon him, if he ſhould have

have the ſole management of ſo diſtaſtful a work.

2. If it be well conſidered, you may perhaps conclude, that the particular Paſtors have as much power of the Keys of Government as is for the general ~~good~~ : That particular Paſtors ſhould have a power to deprive members of choice ſpiritual priviledges, without controul if they do amiſs, were Tyranny rather than Government. *Calvin* concludeth thus: 'I never thought it uſeful, 'ſaith he, to commit the power ſof 'Excommunication to every Paſtor: 'for it is an *odious* thing, and an ex- *Calv. Ep. ad Gaſp. Lizetum.* 'ample not to be approved, and 'which would ſoon ſlip into Ty- 'ranny.

3. 'Diſcipline, ſaith Mr. *Herle*, ſo 'liable to *contempt*, needs the help 'of *Majeſty*, *Authority*, *Reverence* 'to make it terrible as an Army 'with Banners. Now the poverty of *Purſe*, *Parts*, and *Youth* of the great-

eſt

eſt part of Pariſh Paſtors, to ſay nothing of the unruly paſſions, and undue prejudices, that private perſons are ſubject too on the one hand, and the *age*, *ſtubbornneſs*, *wealth*, *honour*, *learning* and *parts* of many of the people, who yet deſerve diſcipline, on the other hand, make diſcipline with honour and ſucceſs utterly impracticable by moſt particular Paſtors in *England*. 'Tis therefore remarkable that when the Brethren had got the Keys by violence out of the hands of the Biſhops into their own, neither Presbyterians nor Independents knew what to do with them, but to lay them by them; they have either totally neglected to uſe them, which was generally the caſe of almoſt all the Presbyterians in *England*, or elſe fallen under the temptations of throwing them into the Body of the common people, which all Congregational men do.

4. To

4. To come close then; If the Parish Pastors in Presbyterians days had the Keys of Government, what were the Churches *then* the better, if they never used them? they generally settled in the neglect of them, and not only so, but argued against the use of them (at that time) as if all things considered it were better to let them alone, wich Mr. *Baxter* lamentably complaineth of, and sharply reproveth in these words:

Baxter, Preface to Reformed Pastor.

Reformed Pastor; p. 218, 222.

'Will you wait till you are dead, 'and leave it as a part of your Epi-'taph to posterity, that you so deep-'ly engaged, and *contended* for that 'which you so abhorred to the 'death, that you would never be 'brought to the practice of it? He telleth them the people had seen their Government in Paper, but not in Actions; that they had heard them talk much of *Government*, but had never seen the thing: and asketh his brethren whether they can

p. 221.

think

think that the people will be ſatisfied with the empty ſound of the word *CHURCH GOVERNMENT*? with abundance more to this effect.

If it be thus, the Pariſh Churches *then* were in no better condition in this reſpect then ours now; nor ſo good neither: And if ſeparation by gathering Churches out of them were a ſin *then*, 'tis ſo now. And here by the way, let the Brethren think, 1. What work they have made for Repentance and Reſtitution, that raſhly ſwore to root out their lawful Governors the Biſhops, and did it, both in reſpect of their dignities and properties, to come at *Diſcipline*; And when they had done, were forced to feed the people with two words, *Government* and *Diſcipline*; but could not let them ſee the thing, becauſe in truth, they found it impracticeable in *England*, in the Presbyterian way, which the Epiſcopal party was always wont

wont to ſay. 2. The Brethren, in all reaſon and good conſcience, ought to accept of a ſober Admonition, to refrain their preſent practiſe of gathering Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, to come at Diſcipline; becauſe upon tryal it hath once already proved a deceitful pretence.

5. Our new Separatiſts from the Pariſh Churches for want of diſcipline, are far more unlike to uſe diſcipline *NOW*, than ever they were, when they ſo neglected it; becauſe then they were not under hatches as now. Their maintenance then was not precarious as now. And Mr. *Baxter* lately hath told us plainly, That the people of the new Separation, inſtead of being ruled by their Paſtors, they ſo much rule their Paſtors, that many of them have been forced to forſake their own judgements, to comply with the violent. What liklihood then is there of exerciſing

Baxters Cure, *p.* 393.

erciſing diſcipline, upon ſuch a head-ſtrong unruly multitude?

6. And laſtly, let the Brethren weigh, what one of the moſt Learned Presbyterians hath ſaid, and they will never ſeparate upon this account:

If the higher powers will not admit of ſuch a form, this may ſatisfie the Subjects conſcience, that Eccleſiaſtical Government is neceſſarily more directed and ordered in the exerciſe thereof, by the determination of the Civil Magiſtrate, in places where the true Religion is maintained, than where perſecuted: They that have received the power, muſt anſwer to God for it: They that are diſcharged from it, ſhall never anſwer for that of which they are bereaved.

Second diſcourſe of the Religion of *England*, p. 41.

Insinuation 4.

The Presbyterian Ministers are forbidden to preach, and the people to have the Sacraments, or their children to be baptized, unless they will say and do such things as they dare not do, for fear of displeasing God: But in the Prebsyterian days, the Parish Churches then drove none such away from Ministry and Communion.

Answ. 1. THe Parish Churches do not own themselves to stand Independent, and to have the power of making Laws for Minister and people within themselves: They therefore bid nor forbid any thing relating either to Minister or people, but according to the direction of the Law-givers.

The plain truth is this, the Presby-

Presbyterian Miniſters not accepting the terms of the publick Eſtabliſhment, become ſilenced by the *LAWS*, not the *People* of the Pariſh Churches, who are ſorry at their hearts, that the Miniſters ever gave the Supreme Authority cauſe to make ſuch ſevere Laws, and many of them are ſorry that ever there were any ſuch Laws made.

2. Though the Presbyterian Miniſters are not there, the ſame Goſpel is preached there by others; no Papiſts, but Proteſtants, of the ſame Chriſtian Faith and Religion, and approved by Authority.

3. As faſt as any of the Presbyterians become convinced of the lawfulneſs of ſubmitting to the publick Laws, and deſire employment in the Church, they are embraced, as many have done, and ſome of them of the moſt

Learned, Pious and Judicious amongſt them.

4. If any remain unſatisfied, and by that means unimployed, doth it therefore follow, that 'tis lawful to cut the Church into ſhreds by Separation, and demoliſh it, as Mr. *Baxter* ſaith Separation doth?

5. The old Nonconformiſts complain'd bitterly of ſome of their company in their days, that having leap'd out of the Surplice, they could not keep them from leaping out of the Church too, by ſeparation into diſtinct Congregations.

But the moſt ſober of them did diſtinguiſh between bare nonconformity to every thing done in the Pariſhes, and gathering Churches out of them into diſtinct Congregations, under a diſtinct Government. They were as great enemies to this practiſe as any, as

as appeareth by their writings againſt the old Separatiſts: They diſtinguiſh between Separation *In* the Church, by purging it; and Separation *From* the Church, by departing from it. Mr. *Rathband*, Anſ. to *Barrow*

6. Whereas 'tis ſaid, *In the Presbyterian days, the Pariſh Churches drove none ſuch away from Miniſtry and Communion, that through fear of diſpleaſing God, durſt not conform to the way of the Pariſh Churches.* To this it is anſwered,

1. The Pariſh Churches then ſet up *Lay-Elders*; concluded them Church Officers by divine Law; ſuffered no man to receive the Lords Supper, that would not be examined by them; which drove people from the Sacrament, that they never received it all their life after. And Mr. *Baxter* ſaith, Setting up Lay-Elders was a piece of Superſtition.

2. Suppoſe the Pariſh Churches

drove none away, the governing power did then drive many excellent Miniſters and Scholars, both out of their Miniſtry and Livings too, by Sequeſtrations, and into Goals and Priſons, to the utter ruine of thouſands, for not taking the Scotch Covenant, and ſuch like obligations, which they could no more do with a good conſcience, than cut their neighbours throat. 3. The Independents on the other hand, durſt not conform to the Presbyterian way, for fear of diſpleaſing God, that's plain, in that they reckon their own way to be *Jure Divino*: But for all that, the Presbyterians did not think it fit to gratifie their erronious conſciences ſo far, as to ſuffer them to gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, into diſtinct Congregations, if they could have got power to hinder it.

They

They did what they could to hinder it, they fasted, prayed, and writ against it: 'Indepen-'dency a great Schism, saith Mr. *Cawdrey*: They Romonstrate and petition the Parliament against it: They preach Sermon after Sermon to the Parliament, crying out of it, and thirsted for power to suppress it.

3. 'Tis well known, the most solid of the Presbyterians are for the National Church way; they are for a governing Church over all the particular Churches and Ministers, and as much for order and uniformity to publick Ecclesiastical Laws, as any, and as severe upon the point of order, and far more, than ever the Bishops were. The Presbyterians by principle, are so far from suffering Dissenters from their Parish Churches, to gather Churches out of them, into distinct Con-

Jus divin. Minister. Anglic. Divine Right of of Presbytery.

gregations, under a distinct Government, that the Scotch Ministers cannot endure so much as the meeting of divers families together, for family worship among them; and give this reason for it, That it tendeth to the prejudice of the publick Ministry, and Schism in the Church; and therefore give this in charge, *At family worship, a special care is to be had*, say they, *that each family keep by themselves.* This counsel of theirs our Presbyterian Assembly thought fit to prefix before their larger Catechism; which sheweth they approved it. I have now answered the four Insinuations of difference, between the state of the Parish Churches now, and their state in Presbyterian days: And by what I have said, I conceive it appeareth evidently, that there is no substantial difference between the state

Scots preface to the Assembly Catechis.

of

of the Pariſh Churches now, and their ſtate in the long Parliament days, wherefore to juſtifie their ſeparation from them: ſo that whatever the Presbyterians ſaid *then*, of the *Schiſm* and ſin of gathering Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, will fall *heavy* upon themſelves, if they ſhall do, as others did before them; nay far heavier, becauſe the ſtate of the Pariſh Churches in *England*, ſince the Re-eſtabliſhment of Epiſcopacy, hath been much better than before *in many reſpects*: Becauſe, 1. Now we have cauſe to hope, there are not many Pariſh Churches (though the means be ſmall) but the means of ſaving faith and knowledge are there; becauſe there is the holy Scriptures read, there is the Prayers of the Church, there is the Articles of Faith, the Lords Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments,

ments, Pſalms, Sacraments and Homilies, if not other Sermons: But in the long Parliament days, after the Biſhops and Liturgy were gone, now generally in the places of very ſmall means, the Church doors have been ſhut up, and, as is ſaid, all publick worſhip of God, for a conſiderable time together ceaſed, and the people delivered up as a prey to all ſorts of Hereticks and Deceivers. 2. In the beſt places, the loſs of the *Liturgy* was undoubtedly a great loſs to the Church, becauſe it condeſcendeth to the weakneſs of the weak, which the *ex tempore* prayers of moſt Miniſters doth not; and then too, becauſe of the unruly paſſions, prejudices, errors and other infirmities of Miniſters of divided parties, the diſuſe of the Lords Prayer, the non-repeating of the *Creed*, *Ten Commandments*, the not calling the people

to

o make publick Confeſſion of their faith, the ſlighting of Infant Baptiſm, the total neglect of the Sacrament of the Lords ſupper in many places, rendred the ſtate of the Pariſh Churches deplorable then. But now by the advantage of a publick Eſtabliſhment, the Pariſh Churches are every day growing into a better condition. What then will be the ſin and evil of thoſe men, that inſtead of repenting of former raſhneſſes, will *ſet their hand again to the ſame Church ruining work?*

Argu-

Argument XII.

We muſt diſtinguiſh between tolerable and intolerable Miniſters. In ſome of the Pariſh Churches the Miniſter is intolerable, and not fit to be a Miniſter; and for this cauſe 'tis lawful to gather Churches.

Anſw. 1. WHat think you of *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the two ſons of *Eli*, they were for their prophaneneſs intolerable Miniſters: They were ſons of *Belial*, that knew not the Lord, and yet no ſeparation from them as Prieſts, juſtifiable. The people that began to abhor the Ordinances upon their account, are called tranſgreſſors, 1 *Sam.* 2.24. as

as hath been noted once before: ſo that though they were intolerable before God, as to their own perſons, and therefore ought to have been excluded: They were tolerable before the Church, as to Church Adminiſtration, ſo long as they enjoyed the Prieſts Office, and not legally ejected. What think you of the Scribes and Phariſees, that *ſaid* and *did* not, whoſe converſation Chriſt himſelf telleth us was a perfect contradiction to their doctrine: ſurely ſuch are intolerable Miniſters before God; but as to the peoples communicating with ſuch in Church Adminiſtrations, they were tolerable; for Chriſt commandeth his own Diſciples to communicate with them, *Matth.* 23. 2. the reaſon is this, becauſe order muſt be kept, and the bleſſing of Ordinances dependeth not upon the goodneſs of the Admi-

Church-Government, p. 231.

Administrators, but the blessing of the Institutor. 'In one word, 'saith Mr. *Baxter*, the Church is 'bound to take many a man as a 'true Minister to them, and re-'ceive the Ordinances from him 'in faith and expectation of a 'blessing, upon promise, who yet before God is a sinful Inva-'der, an Usurper of the Ministry, 'and shall be condemned for it.

But 2. By the Ecclesiastical Law, no man entreth the Ministry in the Church of *England*, whose abilities are not first tryed by Learned men, able to judge of mens fitness, who subscribe not to the Book of Articles, and of whose holy and sober conversation, satisfaction is not first received. In case any Minister prove otherwise, and become intolerable, the people ought not to *right* themselves by Separation, but in *a legal way*, by the assistance of law-

lawful Authority; becauſe otherwiſe, if the people once get head, break looſe from the reins of Government, and turn Reformers, the remedy, in reſpect of the publick, will be worſe than the diſeaſe, to a particular Pariſh. 'Tis to deſpiſe Government, break order, introduce Anarchy, the mentable conſequence whereof, *England* hath found by woful experience, and 'tis to be wiſhed it may be a warning to all Engliſh Subjects for the future, to take heed of all diſorderly motions and proceedings.

3. Intolerable Miniſters, whether by hereſie or prophaneneſs, on complaint made, and ſufficient proof, cannot continue in their places, and therefore there will be no need of Separation upon this account. The Biſhops lately have turned out divers for ſcandal, and are very ſevere in the

the point, and resolve to be more so.

4. The common people, except in some notorious case of debauchery and prophaneſs, are no competent Judges who are tolerable, and who are intolerable; but leſs able to judge now than ever, becauſe upon diſturbing our fixed ſtate Eccleſiaſtical, and breaking the hedge of Government, a Serpent hath bit us, I mean, the Devil took his opportunity, and fill'd the Nation with Hereticks and Impoſtors, ſo that the peoples heads are fill'd with odd notions, mad opinions, and hair-brain'd fancies, all over *England*. Mr. *Edwards* telleth us, that in a ſhort time 180 errours *appeared amongſt us*: Mr. *Caſe* telleth the Parliament, That the *errours in the Biſhops days, were but tolerable trifles, but now*, ſaith he, *the Nation is filled with*

with doctrines of Devils. To this effect, Mr. *Pool*, Mr. *Cranford*, and Mr. *Manton* tell us, that in the Biſhops days, *Errours walked in the dark: But now, ſay they, cum privilegio, for the more ſpeedy corrupting the people.* Sixty and odd Miniſters of the City of *London*, joyn in an Exhortation to their people, and tell them, that horrid and hideous errours had for ſome years paſt abounded amongſt us againſt Scriptures, Deity of Chriſt, Holy Ghoſt, Trinity, Immortality of the Soul, Reſurrection of the dead, Heaven and Hell, decrying and abuſing Ordinances, as ſo many empty forms; that the truths of Chriſtianity were in danger of being buried under the heap and rubbiſh of all ſorts of errours: This the Church got by turning out the Biſhops. Now whilſt the Nation is thus infected, 'tis impoſſi-

In an Epiſt. to Mr. *Pools* Book for the Deity of the Holy Ghoſt. 1660.

ble the common people ſhould be able to make judgement of the tolerableneſs or intolerableneſs of Miniſters: Perſons will now be judged tolerable or intolerable, not according to the reaſon of the thing, but as they either hit or miſs particular *by* opinions taken up by divided parties.

5. If it be the duty of every individual member of the Church, to ſit in judgement of the tolerableneſs and intolerableneſs of the legal Miniſters; and if judged intolerable, then to ſeparate into a new Church, what can follow upon this practiſe, but Separation upon Separation to the end of the world, and that from one end of the Nation to the other? For there is no man, though never ſo worthy, but by ſome ſilly and erroneous perſons will be thought intolerable. In my humble opinion, inſtead of feeding

ing the wanton humour of Separation, by such Insinuations as these, it were better for the poor people to hear the wise counsel of *Solomon*, against self-confidence, *Prov.* 3. 6. and *Paul* the Apostles counsel to the Church members at *Rome*, against self-conceit, *Rom.* 12. 16. and that every man would think soberly of himself: it were better for the common people to hear of modesty, poverty of Spirit, the duty of humility, and how improbable it is for them to make so true and so good a judgement for themselves, as their lawful Governors, in such a settled Church as ours is, than to be supposed able and fit to judge their Ministers and Judges. 'Tis impossible we should ever be happy, till the people have learn'd to think more meanly of themselves, and more honorably of their Gover-

nors, as Mr. *Baxter* hath often told us.

Argument XIII.

Some Pariſh Churches about London *are grown too numerous, that all cannot come to the Pariſh Churches; therefore, &c.*

1. WHere lieth the reaſon of the practical inference of the Brethren, from theſe premiſes: Some Pariſh Churches about *London*, cannot contain their members; Therefore Nonconformiſts may lawfully gather Churches all *England* over. 'Tis well known, they that gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, have no regard to

to any of theſe circumſtances, but gather them out of the Pariſh Churches, and practiſe the Sacraments among them where ever they are: And by ſome it is obſerved, that for the moſt part they gather Churches in great Cities where there is no need.

2. Where the caſe of any Pariſh is ſuch, the people ſhould be taught to remonſtrate their caſe to lawful Authority, that Tabernacles may be built, as hath been in divers places in the City, ſince the fire, till a way can be found for building more Churches or Chappels, and alſo to appoint them ſome pious, peaceable, orthodox Miniſters to officiate; which would be preſently granted. This is God sway, becauſe orderly: The other way is tumultuous, and tendeth to ſedition, and to practiſe without

all reverence of Authority, and as if we did not look upon our ſelves as members of an eſtabliſh'd Church, but as a company of ſcattered Chriſtians in a Pagan Country.

3. Till Tabernacles can be built, there are neigbouring Churches capable of more than their own Pariſhes, to which they may reſort.

4. The Pariſh Churches now that are ſo numerous, were ſo too when Presbyterians cryed out of gathering Churches out of the Pariſh Churches by the Independents: Beſides the Plague in 1665. hath deſtroyed many thouſands ſince; therefore this is no Argument to juſtifie Sepation now, no more than it was in thoſe days.

Argu-

Argument XIV.

That the Conformiſts in the publick Temples are not enough to preach to the people, and defend them from Popery: Non-Conformiſts therefore ought to help, and 'tis their duty, though they gather Churches: And the Pariſh bounds are not of Divine Inſtitution.

1. WHether the publick Miniſters be enough to carry on the publick Services, or not enough, is a matter proper for for the conſideration and judgement of the governing Church, into whoſe hands the Law hath put ſuch truſts; not *Anſw.*

proper for private perſons, further than to remonſtrate and petition: If private perſons ſhall preſume to make themſelves Judges in matters of publick cognizance, and practiſe upon their own judgement, contrary to the publick Laws, in ſuch a ſettled Church as the Church of *England* is: 'Tis impoſſible for ſuch perſons to paſs without cenſure of turbulent. Mr. *Cawdry* telleth Dr. *Owen* of a caſe like this, and ſaith, 'Tis an Anabaptiſtical *Munſter*-principle at the bottom.

Independency a great Schiſm, *p.* 190.

2. Whereas 'tis ſaid, the Pariſh bounds are not of *divine Inſtitution*. I anſwer, 'Tis true they are not of *divine Inſtitution* (in *totidem verbis*) they are no where particularly inſtituted in the New Teſtament: But they are of divine Inſtitution, as the Laws of Nature are divine, and as they

they are contained in the general Rules of the Word, where there are no particular Rules in the caſe, 1 *Cor.* 14. *Let all things be done decently, orderly, and for edification*: Which is impoſſible to do in ſuch a great Nation of Chriſtian Profeſſors as *England* is, if the whole be not put into parts, under particular Paſtors; as the General of an Army putteth his Souldiers: and alſo if the parts offer to break their Ranks, and refuſe to keep their proper places and ſtations appointed by Authority: As they do with a witneſs, that forſaking their own *Miniſter* and Neighbourhood, to whoſe conduct and communion Gods Providence and the Laws of the Land have committed them, take the boldneſs to ſettle themſelves in a ſtated way of Church Communion with others, ſcattered here and

and there, without any regard to Governors or the Government.

3. Whereas 'tis ſaid, the people want the help of more Miniſters than Conformiſts, to defend them from Popery, and for this Nonconformiſts may gather Churches:

Anſw. 1. This Separation Mr. *Baxter* and the *London* Miniſters tell us, ſcattereth the Members, and cutteth the Church into ſhreds; what offence or defence can the Church in ſuch a ſhattered condition make againſt an Adverſary? The ſtrength of a Church in every Nation, as well as an Army, lieth in the union of the whole into one body, with ſome governing Church power over the whole: By virtue of which union, the whole, in all the parts, become capable of the ſuccouring influences of the *whole*, and without which union it is im-

impoſſible: Theſe things are evident by the light of Nature, and the *ſafety* of the whole is concerned in the orderly motion of the parts, in their ſeveral places and ſtations: For a Nonconformiſt then to the publick Eſtabliſhment, to preſume to gather Churches out of the Pariſh Churches, what doth he but introduce Anarchy, and overthrow all Church Government? which to do, is not to ſave the people from Popery, but to betray them to it.

In this I ſay nothing, but according to the ſenſe of moſt judicious Presbyterian. In his ſecond Diſourſe of the Religion of *England*, p. 44. ſpeaking of the conſiderate Nonconformiſt, he ſaith, 'They would rather help to 'bear up the preſent Eccleſiaſti-'cal ſtate, than that *Popery* ſhould 'break in by Anarchy, or the 'the diſſolution of all Church 'Go-

☞ 'Government. Again, 'An am-
'ple fixed ſtate Eccleſiaſtical, is
'neceſſary to uphold and increaſe
'the Religion, as well againſt in-
'fidelity, as againſt *Popery*. So that in the judgement of this Learned Author, to diſturb our fix'd ſtate Eccleſiaſtical, which is done with a witneſs by diſorderly gathering Churches, and running into parties: This is the way to bring in Popery, and not to keep it out.

4. To ſcatter the Pariſh Churches by Separation, is ſo far from affording help againſt Popery, that 'tis notoriouſly to proſecute the Jeſuites deſigns and councils for the reducing us to Popery, which is to do all they can to keep the Church of *England* everlaſtingly in an unfixed ſtate; there being nothing they dread ſo much, as our getting into order again: 'Our founda-

'tion

'tion, ſaith one of them, muſt 'be mutation, this will cauſe a 'relaxation, which ſerveth as 'ſo many violent diſeaſes, as the 'Stone, Gout, to the ſpeedy de-'ſtruction, &c. *Prins Introduct. p.* 89.

Again, 'If the Puritans get the 'day, we ſhall make great ad-'vantage of it; for they will be 'unſettled, and all in pieces, and 'not know how to ſettle the Go-'vernment. Read Mr. *Baxters* Key for Catholicks, *p.* 318.

Again, 'Factions and diſtracti-'ons give us footing for continu-'al attempts. To make all ſure, 'we will ſecretly have our party 'among the Puritans alſo, that 'we may be ſure to maintain our 'intereſt, which way ever the 'world go.

'Cheriſh their diſſentions, ſaith *Adam Contren* the Jeſuite, ſpeak-'ing of Proteſtants, and when 'all men ſee, there is nothing 'certain among them, the people Second Book of Politicks.

'will

'will eaſily yield, meaning to Popery. To this purpoſe Mr. *Baxter* telleth us, 'that in a diſguiſe 'they thruſt themſelves into all 'Sects and parties, not only Ana-baptiſts, and Independents are 'animated by them, but they ani-mate the Vaniſts, Behmeniſts, 'and other Enthuſiaſts, the Seek-ers, the Quakers, the Origeniſts, 'and all the Juglers and hiders of 'the times.

The laſt Direction.

Key for Catholicks, 318.

How then can it be adviſable for us, by multiplying ſeparate Meetings from the Pariſh Churches, to make ſtill more Receptacles for the Jeſuites to play their pranks in.

5. And laſtly, There are not very many Miniſters that are fit to meddle much in the Popiſh Controverſies, either by diſputing or preaching, eſpecially in the private Meetings, that are ſo full of diſtractions and odd opinions.

nions. There is nothing pleaſeth a Learned Jeſuite better, than to hear ſome of the private Meeting Miniſters, undertake to diſpute or preach againſt Popery; becauſe the moſt of them having more Confidence than Learning, and more heat than light, they will either miſtake the queſtion, or elſe through ignorance or prejudice, call that Popery which is not, or elſe charge them with that they are not guilty of, or at beſt make a weak defence: So that the Adverſary rather gaineth ground, than loſeth by ſuch oppoſitions.

When the Jeſuites get into one of the ſeparate Meetings, and hear them cry out of Epiſcopal Government and Ordination, as Popiſh and Antichriſtian, what ſport this maketh them, may eaſily be conceived, for that the Brethren themſelves

are

are forced to confeſs that there was no other way of entring the Miniſtry for many hundred years.

Jus divin. Miniſter. Angl. p. 31.

Again, At other times to hear the Common-prayer Book reviled for Popiſh, and the Miniſters maintenance by Tythes Popiſh, and then the Pariſh bounds Popiſh at laſt, Infant Baptiſm Popiſh and Antichriſtian: I ſay, it cannot be imagined what pleaſure it muſt be to the Adverſary, to find when Popery is oppoſed, thoſe things are condemned for Popery and Antichriſtian, which the whole Chriſtian world for many hundreds of years hath owned for unqueſtionable good things: and by this means, inſtead of diſgracing the Pope, we put honour upon the Pope, as Mr. *Vines* the learned Presbyterian Miniſter once obſerved and ſaid, 'At 'this

'this rate, ſaith he, of counting 'things Popiſh and Antichriſtian, 'we ſhall make the Pope and Anti-'chriſt a brave fellow ſhortly, by 'making him the Author of ſo ma-'ny good things.

Argument XVI.

We are told of ſeparating from the Church of England, *but we do not know what the Church of* England *is, and why it ſhould not be as well Schiſm for the Pariſh Church Members not to frequent the Private Churches, as for the private Separate Churches not to frequent them, we know not.*

1. OUr *New* Non-conformiſts are it ſeemeth come very

near ſhaking hands with the old Brownists: They indeed could not tell what the Church of *England* was, but the Old Non-conformists could tell; for notwithſtanding their Nonconformity, they owned the *Church of England* ſtill to be a True Church, in the ſame ſenſe with the Conformiſts; as appeareth by their Book againſt *Barrow* and others wherein they ſay thus; 'The Church of *England* is a *True* 'Church of *Chriſt*, and ſuch a one 'as whoſoever wittingly and wil-'lingly ſeparateth himſelf, cutteth 'himſelf from Chriſt. They reckon their Ordination by Biſhops valid, the Oath of Canonical Obedience to them lawful; their Suſpenſions and Deprivations (if according to the Law of the Land) to be yielded to.

Barrow, Greenwood

Mr. *Rathband* every page.

Pag. 41. So long as the Biſhops ſuſpend and deprive according to the Law of the Land, 'We account of the 'action herein (ſay they) as the Act 'of

'of the Church, which we may and 'ought to reverence and yield un-'to.

The *London* Miniſters alſo when they writ their Book called, *The Divine Right of the Miniſtry*, they did not think the Church of *England* ſuch a ſtrange thing, neither in name nor thing. They argue thus: If all the Churches in the world are called One Church, let no man be offended if all the Congregations in *England* be called *The Church of England*. *Jus divinum p.* 14. *Miniſterii.*

Q. But now it is made a queſtion what is the *Church of England*?

Anſ. 1. Upon this occaſion, I would by the way admoniſh all honeſt men to take heed of entertaining the *firſt ſcruples* of conformity to the Church of *England*, becauſe men know not what will become of their ſcruples, nor where to make an end of them, to the unſpeakable damage of the Church and

themſelves, and of the great intereſt of Chriſtian Religion in the main; inſomuch that if the queſtion were put ſince the Reformation, What fruit of them, it muſt be anſwered, *None*, but ſuch whereof we are aſhamed, even the lamentable decay of the moral part of Religion, ſtraining at gnats, and ſwallowing camels. This by the by.

Now for anſwer to the queſtion.

Q. What is the Church of *England*?

Anſ. It is a Company of Chriſtian Profeſſors of faith in Chriſt, inhabiting the *Engliſh* Nation, under one Civil Government, by the Laws united into one Eccleſiaſtical Society (though parted into many Congregations) under a publick Miniſterial Church-governing power over the whole, called the National Synod under the higheſt power. This is the Church of *England*.

And it is a true Political Society; there

there is the governing part, and the governed part; and both parts take the name of the Church, as it was in the Jewiſh Church; the governing part the *Sanhedrin*, as well as the governed part the *People*, both parts take the name of the Church. And as in the Church of *Scotland*, the General Aſſembly take the name of the Church of *Scotland*; So in *England*, the *Synod* of *England* take the name of Church of *England*.

Numb. 35. 24. comp. with Joſhua 20. 4, 5, 6.

And Mr. *Rathband* the old Nonconformiſt telleth *Barrow* the Browniſt, who ſpake ſlightingly of the Church of *England*, as now the new Separatiſts do; I ſay he telleth them, That all the known Churches in the world acknowledge our Church, ſpeaking of the Church of *England* for their Siſter. Further ſaith, That never any one Reformed Church made queſtion of it, That the womb of the Church

Mr. *Rathband*, p. 6.

of *England* bare the Queſtioniſts themſelves, and that her paps gave them ſuck, is well known; That it is a Church that hath brought forth and brought up as many learned men and good Chriſtians as any Church in the world. And this hath been acknowledged by the learned men of other Churches.

Being thus we are furniſhed with a true meaſure for the judging of criminal Schiſm in *England*, and are helped to anſwer a new and an odd queſtion; Why it ſhould not as well be called Schiſm for the Pariſh Church Members, not to hold communion with the ſeparate Aſſemblies, as it is called Schiſm in the ſeparate Aſſemblies to withdraw from the Pariſh Churches.

The Anſwer is this, becauſe the Pariſh Church Members, by keeping to the Pariſh Churches and Miniſtry, they keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace; they maintain

maintain publick charity; they obſerve publick order according to the eſtabliſht Laws; they keep their ranks and hold their places, where the Law and Right Reaſon hath fixed them. Theſe are therefore the only regular Aſſemblies.

As for the ſeparate Meetings of Churches gathered out of the Pariſh Churches, they are like ſo many Mutineers in an Army, that break all publick order, let go charity, offer a publick affront to the Laws, diſturb our fixed Eccleſiaſtical State; and therefore are unlawful Aſſemblies, and not to be frequented, but avoided as the proper makers of diviſion. Neither is it poſſible for the Brethren that ſeparate upon the terms that they now practiſe it, to give us any definition of ſchiſm, that either themſelves heretofore, or the Chriſtian Church did ever account good: but it will ſtick as cloſe to them as the skin to their fleſh. Rom. 16. 17.

Obj. But if it be objected, as I have heard it hath; They that give the cauſe make the Schiſm.

Anſ. I anſwer, The Brethren do not diſtinguiſh between the occaſion of a thing by ſome *Accident*, and the *Real cauſe of a thing*. Though it ſhould be granted that Eccleſiaſtical Impoſitions, as conditions of ſacramental communion, ſuch as the Croſs and Kneeling, through the weakneſs of people may become an *occaſion*, it will never be proved that any Impoſitions are the *real cauſe*, except they could be proved to be ſomewhere or other forbidden in Gods Word, and that as *plainly* as obedience to lawful Authority in lawful things is commanded in Gods Word. This Mr. *Baxter* and many others hath taught us: But for this no man of our new Separatiſts hath ever had the confidence to affirm; ſo that culpable ſchiſm lieth upon all the ſeparate Congrega-

gregations from the Church of *England* old and new.

Obj. That may be a ſin to one man that is not ſo to another; To him that *thinketh* it a ſin to ſeparate from the Pariſh Churches it will be ſin, but to *me* it is no ſin.

Anſ. The Text referred to by the Objector concerneth the eating or not eating of *this* or *that* meat, and the obſerving or not obſerving *dayes*, actions that in their own nature are neither good nor evil: And in reſpect of ſuch things, error of conſcience in one man will make that unlawful to him that is not ſo to another.

But in reſpect of things *morally evil*, no error of conſcience can make ſuch things *good* to any man which are in themſelves *evil*. Theft will be Theft, and Murther will be Murther, and Adultery, Adultery; and ſo Schiſm will be Schiſm, in the man that committeth

theſe

these sins: Let any mans private thinking of these things be what it will, no mans error of conscience one way or other can alter the nature either of moral *good* or *evil*.

Argument XVII.

To desert ones Ministry is not lawful; 'tis a piece of sacriledge. We cannot preach except we have hearers, we cannot have hearers, but Members of some Parish Churches: Therefore we must gather Churches.

Answ. 1. ST. *Austin* said, A man should not commit the least evil of sin to save all the damned from Hell: And St. *Paul* took it for a notorious slander in any man that reported him for one that said men may do evil

evil that good may come. A good Christian is bound to do good though evil come to him for it, I mean the evil of affliction. But the the Christian Religion will suffer no man to commit the evil of sin, that good may come to himself or others by it. Now to gather Churches out of the Parish Churches, with which communion may be held without sin, maketh men guilty of a most horrible Schism, because it is to separate without any sufficient cause: 'Tis to tear and rend a Church to pieces, and cut it into shreds only for personal richer Church-priviledges, or secular ends: 'Tis such a monstrous art of uncharitableness, that the new nature loatheth to think of it. Rom. 3.8

Now, that Communion may be held without sin in the Parish Churches, the Brethren acknowledg it. Mr. *Baxter* himself practiseth it, and hath writ a Book to perswade the Cure of Church divisions.

the Brethren to it; and telleth us at a full meeting, The Miniſters agreed it lawful and fit.

Now I would know then by what good authority this ſeparating practiſe upon theſe terms can be juſtified from the guilt of the moſt horrible Schiſm that ever was heard of in the Chriſtian world.

Obj. But ſaith the Objector, To deſert ones Miniſtry is not lawful, 'tis a point of Sacriledge.

Anſ. 1. This Argument is eaſily anſwered, by diſtinguiſhing upon the non-exerciſe of the Miniſterial Office.

'Tis one thing voluntarily to deſert one Miniſtry, by running to *another Calling* for *eaſe*, *profit*, *honour*, or *fear of perſecution*. Another thing to ſuffer ſuſpenſion of the preſent exerciſe of the Miniſterial Office, in a particular place, by the Laws of the Chriſtian Church in the Land where a man liveth againſt ones

ones will. Theſe are two things far and widely differing one from another.

To do the *firſt*, is a *Complication* of many vices, and is in plainneſs a wicked Sacriledge; and ſuch men are not fit for the Kingdom of God:

But the ſecond is the *Illuſtration* of four Cardinal virtues, *Humility*, *Meekneſs*, *Self-denial*, *Obedience*. Some of the Virtues all men put off to too great a degree, which they put on ſeparation from the Pariſh Churches of *England*.

2. A man that ſuffereth ſuſpenſion of the exerciſe of his Miniſterial Office in a particular place by the Laws of the Land, in a ſtate of the true Religion, doth not deſert his Miniſterial Office, becauſe his Miniſterial Office relateth in the firſt place to the *Catholick Church*, in all the Countries of the world, as the Brethren have always urged againſt the Independents. So that if a Miniſter be ſuſpended in one place, he may remove to another.

Suſpenſion is not like Excommunication: If a man be legally excommunicated in one place, his Excommunication (if known) may and ought to be a bar againſt his communion with the Church all over the world, becauſe Excommunication

cation respecteth the Catholick Church, so doth not Suspension. The just reasons of Excommunication are the same all over the world, which is obstinate persisting in great transgressions of the general Precepts of the Gospel.

But Suspensions may be *just* in particular Countries; not only for crimes, but for *not complying with publick Ecclesiastical Constitutions* for the Government and Discipline of the Church, and orderly and decent administration of the Ordinances, though through weakness of judgment: The reason is this, because the *good* of *Order* in an established Church is greater to the Publick, than the use of particular mens gifts.

Calvin saith, 'Some orderly form ought 'chiefly to be observed in Churches which 'are best maintained by a well fram'd dis- 'position of all things. And further, 'Be- 'cause of the great variety that is in mens '*Manners*, *Minds*, *Judgments*, *Wits*, 'No policy can be stedfast enough, unless 'it be established by certain Laws. He saith also, 'There must be an appointed 'Form, or no orderly usage can be obser- 'ved. Further he saith, 'Without such 'Laws Churches are dissolved from their 'sinews,

Calvins Instit. p. 402.

'sinews,' and utterly deformed and ſcattered a-
'broad.

3. That ſuſpended Miniſters in the *Engliſh* Church for Non-conformity ſhould acquieſce therein, was the judgment of the old Non-conformiſts. It hath been taken notice of already, *p.27.* in anſwer to the Eighth Argument; by which every one may take notice how far the preſent Non-conformiſts are departed from the judgments of the old Non-conformiſts, and gone into the way of Browniſts. By the way take notice what a dangerous ſlippery path the path of ſeparation from the Pariſh Churches is.

4. And laſtly, To conclude, If there were any thing of ſacriledge in the caſe, it cannot lye upon the Miniſters that ſuffer ſuſpenſion, becauſe to commit ſacriledge, is to be active in a thing, 'tis to be a practiſer of the evil of *ſin*; But to ſuffer a legal Suſpenſion is to be *paſſive*, 'tis to be a ſufferer of the evil of *affliction*,

If the Church ſuffer by the non-exerciſe of the Miniſterial Office by ſuſpended Miniſters, in reaſon they muſt anſwer for it that make the Laws; but they that by the Laws are bereaved of the opportunity, need never fear being charged with the duty.

I conclude with the Saying of a judicious pious Non-conformiſt, in a Book called *The Second Diſcourſe of the Religion of England, p.* 48.

'I do

'I do here ſolemnly profeſs that I am chiefly ſolli-
Second Diſcourſe of the Religion of England. p. 48.
'citous for the tranquillity and reſt of a troubled Nation; as for my 'own concernment, my deprivation 'is an affliction to me: And I would do any thing 'that were not ſin to me, to recover the liberty of my 'publick ſervice in the Church: But if it cannot be, 'I ſubmit to his good pleaſure by whoſe determi-'minate counſel all things are brought to paſs; and '*am contented to remain a ſilenced ſufferer* for conſci-'ence towards God. Note this, That that which the Objector reckoned the ſin of wicked ſacriledge, this learned Man to the old Non-conformiſts reckoneth to be the duty of Chriſtian patience.

Again in another place, touched once before, 'An 'ample fixed State Eccleſiaſtical is neceſſary to up-'hold and increaſe true Religion as well againſt 'Infidelity as againſt Popery: The looſe part of 'the world would turn to a wearineſs, and con-'tempt of divine Inſtitutions: And Chriſtianity 'it ſelf would be much endangered in a ſtate of '*Ataxy* and *Unfixedneſs*. By this the Reader may ſee how the preſent Church-confounding practice of the Brethren is condemned by one of themſelves. In his judgment they are in the way of endangering, not onely the Proteſtant Religion in *England*, but Chriſtianity it ſelf.

FINIS.